

MY BEWITCHED LOVER

SUICIDE OR ~ WHAT?

A Sailor Who Was Killed Three Times

The MYSTERY of the FLOATING KNIFE





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Vol. 6

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The Specter of the Mad King

All Germany has been started by the report that the ghost of King Ludwig, the land of the control of the contro

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The

Invisible Tenant

Read this amazing confession of a woman who dares to live with a ghost!

OT long ago a photographer and myself left Boston on a strange mission. Our orders were to proceed by automobile to New Hampshire and obtain an exclusive interview with a woman who, according to

rumor, lived with a ghost,

Some weeks previous, New England had been startled by the report that the phantom of a beautiful woman, dead for a hundred years, had appeared in the little town of Henniker. New Hampshire, thirty miles west of Manchester. The ghost was supposed to pay nightly visits to its ancestral home high on a mountain overlooking the village.

Close upon this information came an Associated Press dispatch concerning this same unearthly visitor. According to this story, which was published in newspapers all over the United States, a phantom stagecoach, drawn by four specter horses, had been seen on the mountain road that led to the haunted house.

FROM other sources we learned that weird tales concerning the old mansion had been in circulation among the residents of Henniker for a hundred years, "Voices" had been heard inside its darkened walls. Doors swung open and shut without the aid of human hands. Bobbing lights sent strange signals to the valley below. Terror and tragedy lurked in its shadows. At least two mysterious deaths, which had never been completely solved, occurred on the

mountainside.

According to the local legend, the phantom stage-coach had appeared on numerous occasions in the past; and many of the earlier inhabitants swore that they had seen it. It always came just as the clock in the village struck twelve and dogs howled from distant farms.

The witnesses gave vivid descriptions of the apparition. Straight over the hill the coach came (they said), death-lights shining from the rusty

The "Ocean-Born Mary" house at Henniker, N. H., where tragedy and terror have lurked for a hundred years



pholograph furnished by L. M. A. Roy

The True Story of New England's Famous Haunted House

By LOWELL AMES NORRIS of the Boston Herald

hamps. It was driven by a portly, transparent coachnan who held his prancing thores by gleaming wisps of reins. The coach pitched and tossed over rooks and middy ruts, but it moved as silently as a shadow. A few disputed this latter statement. They said the screech of a dry axle rang out in the night, high above the muffled sound of horses' hoofs.

M OST of those who claimed to see this fearful apparition had turned and field. One or two courageous souls had remained although their hearts pounded and their knees trembled. Seated inside the coach, these witnesses declared, was a beautiful woman, all in white, who rode with averted head. Behind rode two misty footmen. One man braver than the rest had followed.

lowed the coach as it lurched on through the darkness. He saw it reach the haunted house and pass through the tumble-down gate. Then, with a flourish, the specter coachman relined in his ghostly steeds beneath the gnarled branches of an old apple tree that stood beside an ancient well.

A footman descended and opened the door of the coach. The woman, in silks and satins that swept the ground and yet left no

mark, walked over to the well and peered inside. Drawn by a curiosity greater than fear, the man approached the silent group.

Suddenly the woman turned and fled toward the coach. Just as she stepped inside, the moon came from behind a cloud and the rays fell full upon her face.

The man leaned forward, then recoiled with a shrick of terror. He had gazed upon the face of a demon! The door of the coach swung to and before the village clock had finished striking, he was alone. The coach had vanished.

Hours later he stumbled down into the village. He had hardly finished telling his story when he dropped to the ground. Around his neck were the marks of livid fingers.

At the present time many residents of Hemilker laugh at this story; others hint of a forgotten murder that took place years ago, when the body of the victim was stuffed down



the well to escape detection. These persons

say that the phantom

haunted house long ago-"Ocean-Born Mary" as the natives call her-whose mortal remains lie buried in the little cemetery

ot Woundless

In enite of modern ekenticism the house has maintained its sinister reputation anduntil very recently-stood untenanted and deserted in its lonely clearing on the mountainside, a mile or so from the nearest neighbor. Many of the younger generation have never heard of its romantic story and laugh to scorn the possibility that any unexplainable things happen in the red house on the hill. Yet it is seldom that anyone uses the mountain road after nightfall-the road traveled long ago by Lafavette, when it was the post-road between Hillsboro and Honkinton

The house is now owned and occupied by Mrs. Flora E. Rov. the widow of a prominent physician and her son, I. M. A. Roy, a well-known New York artist. Their moving into the house was the occasion for the revival of all the old tales-as was to be expected. The surprising thing, however, is this; according to our information, both Mrs. Roy and her son actually believed that they shared the house with a ghost!

And then came the report of the reappearance of the phantom stage-coach! Just what it might mean was a matter of conjecture. Perhaps the whole story was a tissue of rumor and lurid imagination. Yet, if there was any truth in it, how does it feel to live in a house said to be haunted? It was my assignment to locate the house, interview Mrs. Roy and find out.

After making numerous detours, we arrived in Manchester, New Hampshire, where we stopped for lunch. As we crossed the long bridge leading to the western part of the city, the sunshine glittered on the spray flung into the air where the river swent over a huge dam.

BY the time we had passed Goffstown, the afternoon sun was slanting down on the breast-shaped mounds of the twin Uncanconuc Mountains. We turned onto a dirt road from which the sky was hardly visible because of the inter-twined branches of the trees overhead.

Over little one-way bridges, around sharp corners, up hills and down valleys, the narrow trail continued. Now and then we would pass through a village with its general store and gasoline pump, its Civil War memorial on the green and its little white church. Then again into the wilderness.

An official iron marker stood by the side of the road. We had entered the township of Hanniker

The afternoon sun was suddenly blotted out by heavy black clouds, appearing from nowhere: they pressed close to the earth shutting off charming vistae of hills and distant mountains. There was an ominous full A four deied langer whieled in the road Drope of rain showed on the windshield. A gust of wind stirred up spirals of dust

IAGGED, vivid bolt of lightning split A JAGGED, VIVIN BOIL C. Ing. of thunder. Then came the rain-sheets of it. We were in the midst of a mountain cloudburst Rain-rain-and more rain driven by a howling wind!

The car quivered in the gale. Rain heat against the roof, hammered against the tightly shut windows dripped through the closed ventilator and radiator. The road became a writhing, twisting torrent. Still we pushed on through a barrage of bluegreen lightning flashes, punctuated by thunder crashes. The engine missed fire, backfired and then resumed its even purr.

Slippery, skidding miles through a wilderness and then-a country store. tousled head peered through the doorway. a hand jerked significantly toward the everpresent gasoline pump.

"Where's the Ocean-Born Mary house?" Blackinton, the photographer, asked,

The man at the door raised his hand to his head.

"Eh, what's thet ver say?" he shouted above the wind, "You'll hev ter speak loud, I'm hard o' hearin'."

"The Ocean-Born Mary house!" Black-

inton shouted. More heads appeared.

"They want to go to the Ocean-Born Mary house!" somebody said-and more men in shirt-sleeves crowded out on the wind-swept piazza.

"Reckon they think it's some newfangled road-house," one of them announced to the others, and they all guffawed.

"We want the Ocean-Born Mary house," the photographer insisted.

"Wal, stranger," one of the men began, "I reckon vou know ver own business best, but it's a bad day ter be goin' ter the Ocean-Born Mary house. Anyway, she sets up thar on thet mountain erbout tew miles back from the main road. Reckon the quickest. way is ter foller the back trail up the mountain, keep on goin' till yer meet the fork of the road, turn ter ver left past the deserted school, keep on goin' 'n vou're thar. Hope you don't meet with the stage-coach on the way up. Thet's the route folks say she takes.

This time nobody laughed.

The rain moderated but the wind still blew a gale. One or two of the men disappeared inside

the store: but the rest, disregarding the weather, watched us in silence until we vanished from view.

We turned off the black macadam road, drove a mile or so on another dirt road lined by somber pines, and then turned onto a narrow wagon trail up the steep side of the mountain. Overhead. the wind still whistled through the trees. Bushes on both sides scratched the sides of the machine as ploughed our way upward, following the almost obliterated wagon tracks. Moisture dripped down from the rain-filled leaves. Swiftly running streams of sometimes

nearly covered the sharply curving, steadily climbing trail.

Just ahead was the fork of the road. In the dull afternoon light the left-hand fork stretched forth into a dark, forbidding avenue of trees whose leaves showed ghastly white in the wind.

Suddenly the photographer grabbed my

"What's that?" he said.

In the shadows, something white fluttered-a vague, indistinct object from which two arms in wisps of white beckoned. Another gust of wind. The car shook and trembled. High above, the trees, lashed in agony, wailed forth a ghostly requiem. The strange Something emerged from its hiding-place. It whirled into the air. We glimpsed it-twisting, turning-hurtling straight toward us. A dull, sodden splash! It struck the car. Reaching, crawling, the Thing climbed over the hood, dripping pools of water. It flung itself against the windshield, oozing like slime across the entire front, Our view

was blotted out. I reached for the emergency

brake. The car skidded to a stop.

Then both of us laughed. Our "ghost" was nothing more nor less than an old bungalow apron "escaped" from some-

body's clothesline.

We turned left at the fork, passing a clearing where a little deserted schoolhouse stood with sagging roof and broken windows. It struck forlorn note reminiscent of Sleepy Hollow and its classic legend

horseman. Another bend in the road and we came to the end of the forest. Just bevond loomed

headless

of the

faded red house set back in another clearing. The house was wind-swept, weather-beaten-a twostory structure of early colonial architecture. Dormer windows protruded from a comfortable old-fashioned roof that told of sturdy hand-hewn timbers beneath the shingles green with age. Years before, there had been several large barns and sheds. These, however, had gone and only skeletons remained to tell of their passingruined foundations and sagging, slanting walls. Although the paint had faded from most of the clapboarding, the house presented a dignified appearance in keeping with its age.

All New England has been startled by the weird phenomena in the Ocean-Born Mary house at Henniker, N. H. Two men were frightened to death there-and dozens of persons claim to have seen a phantom coach-and-four on the mountain road near-by.

But Mrs. Flora E. Roy, widow of a prominent physician, was unafraid-she determined to make her home there. The most astounding manifestations followed! She. too. saw and heard ghastly, unexplainable things-the cold horror of the invisible world closed around her! But she refused to flee. Today this gentle little woman is still living fearlessly among a thousand terrors!

It is the most amazing story ever told!

Beyond, the mountain fell off rapidly, Clouds were swiftly lifting in the gale. Rays from the setting sun fell on majestic rows of distant mountains. A man emerged from underneath a grayish-blue Ford car parked by the side of the house; he was dressed in riding breeches and a flannel shirt. He came down the tiled path to meet

It was L. M. A. Roy, the artist. We had arrived at the Ocean-Born Mary house, The front door opened. Standing in the

spacious doorway was a quaint old lady in rusty black with Paisley shawl and dainty white cap.

"Won't you come in?" she asked cordially. This was Mrs. Roy, the woman

who lives with a ghost,

"UES," began Mrs. Roy, some time later when we were comfortably seated before logs crackling in the fireplace in Ocean-Born Mary's house. "It's all true. Ocean-Born Mary has indeed returned-and she has found peace at last. The curse on the house is ended,"

"You mean she's living here with you?" I asked, hardly able to believe my ears.

"Certainly," Mrs. Roy replied in all seriousness. "I suppose some folks wouldn't like to live in a house with a ghost. I think that it is wonderful. She's a whole lot of company. Living so far away from the rest of the world as we do-the radio is our only connecting link-it's a comfort to know when my son is away that there is someone else in the house."

The photographer who had remained silent up to now leaned forward.

"Then you are a spiritualist?" he ques-

tioned. "Not at all," denied Mrs. Rov. "I merely have an open mind. I think that the radio has proven very conclusively that we are constantly surrounded by influences of which we know nothing. Yes, it seems to me that we are living in a world of psychic wonders-that the unseen world is coming closer and closer. Perhaps we shall soon come to the point where we can communicate with those who have passed on. In fact. I think that here in the Ocean-Born Mary house we have arrived at a solution of the problem. At least Ocean-Born Mary has managed to make herself understood the several times she thought it necessary." She paused. "The solution," she said slowly, "is simply the result of the casting out of fear. Most people are afraid of spirit

demonstrations. I am not, because I am thoroughly convinced that the good in the spiritual world outweighs the forces of evil." "Why should anyone be afraid?" inter-

posed Mr. Roy. "I think if people were to study these things seriously, they would not be so frightened when they encounter the supernatural. If spirits wished to harm folks, they could do so anywhere."

"People advised us against buying this house when we first broached the idea," continued Mrs. Roy. "They said the house had an ugly history. They told us terrible things about it. They said natives avoided it because of the voices heard after dark and the death-lights which were said to lure people to their doom. According to their stories, once or twice folks had come to investigate and they had never been seen afterward. Two mysterious deaths were definitely known to have occurred near-by and there was talk of other horrible tragedies, including a murder long ago near the

"Kirk Pierce, the nephew of President Franklin Pierce, gave us much information and so did several members of the Wallace family, descendants of the woman whose spirit haunts this house. The first uncanny death, actually on record, was that of Major Robert Wallace, the son of Ocean-Born Mary and the original owner of the coach-and-four which has appeared re-

cently on the mountain road.

"According to the story, Major Wallace was overseeing some slaves down in the fields behind the house. He was riding one of his favorite horses. After the work was finished, he desired to get back to the house as soon as possible and so he took a short cut on a lonely and unfrequented path. He had gone only a few yards when the horse stopped short, flanks quivering.

"COMETHING was ahead in the path. The horse for the first time in its life seemed frightened and tried to turn back. Major Wallace gave him the spur. Again the horse tried to turn back. The Major could see nothing ahead, though he had thought for a moment that there might be a snake coiled up in the path, ready to strike. Nobody knows just what happened next. But hours later they found the Major lying face down on the turf. A terrible look of fear had transfixed his features. And no one ever learned the secret of his awful experience, for he never spoke of it and died soon after. This was in 1815.

"Some time later the house took its second toil. Another Wallace was found dead on the neountainside. On his face was that same terrible look—a look which might have been occasioned by a peep into the deepest recesses of hell. Officially it was called suited, but people hinted there was more to the story than ever reached the public.

"We were only able to get the most meager information concerning both of these deaths, and some parts of the story may have been idle hearsay. Yet without a doubt the house exerted some sort of an evil influence which the good folk of Henniker feared.

"DE were unafraid. We were determined that the gossip of a hundred years would not shake our personal liking for the massion, Besides, if there was any truth in the story, both my son and myself thought that if we made the Ocean-Born Mary house a real home, filled with unfolding love and happiness, it might bring peace and content to those troubled souls who were said to have haunted it.

"I will admit we were skeptical. We thought nothing would happen. But we were wrong."

Sitting there before the dying embers in the huge fireplace, with the silence of the New Hampshire hills creeping down upon the house, Mrs. Roy proceeded to unfold the amazing, almost unbelievable story of how the ghost of Ocean-Born Mary came back to live in her ancestral home after more than a hundred years of troubled wandering.

Things had moved along in routine fashion the first few days after the Roys moved into the haunted house. Both mother and son noted with some interest the old H and L hinges which early settlers installed to scare away the devil, and examined the double crosses on the doors supposed to be sure protection against whiches.

A week passed and still nothing happened.

And then—

Mrs. Roy came downstairs one morning to find the door leading from the kitchen into the Engle Room wide open. She knew it had been shut the night before, because she had had considerable difficulty in closing the latch. No one clse could have opened it. She was alone in the house, Her

son was away on business.

Some hours later she happened to mention the fact to a chance acquaintance in the village. To Mrs. Roy's surprise the acquaintance took it seriously.

"Why, of course!" this woman said.
"You didn't think that you folks were oing to have that big house all to yourselves, did you? Ocean-Born Mary has
come home. That Eagle Room used to be
her bedroom. The marks of her fourposter can still be seen on the floor."

To Mrs. Roy it was merely a coincidence. Yet before the morning was were, she found herself in the little village cemetery before the grave of Ocean-Born Mary, who had died out the thirteenth of February, 1814, "in the 94th year of the rage." And before returning to the house on the hill, she obtained a copy of Colonel Coggswell's history of Henniker, intending to read at her earliest opportunity the romantic story of the woman whose home she now occuried.

But there were many things to do. The afternoon hours slipped by quickly. Her son returned home before dinner and it was evening before she thought of the book again. Then it was dark and she was dead tired. She placed the history in the book-cate for safekeeping and went upstairs to bed—first remembering, however, to fasten the door that had opened so mysteriously the night before.

Several hours later she awakened from a sound sleep with a start. Her chamber door was swinging ajar. The house was silent except for the regular breathing of her son in the next room. She got up and closed the door, fastening the latoh tightly. For ten minutes she lay still, trying to drop off to sleep again. Instead, each moment found her growing more and more vide-awake. There came a sound from downstairs. The old grandfather's clock was ready to strike the hour. She counted the strokes. It was eleven c'clock. Three was no moon. Outside, the night stretched dark and forbidding.

SLUMBER would not be coaxed. She counted sheep, made mental maps and repeated the multiplication tables. All in vain. The darkness seemed to shut down in a thick blanket of gloom, rolling up against the house in smothering folds that made breathing difficult. Vaguely uneaxy, she get quietly out of bed, tiptod across the room to the mantel, got a candle, lighted it and tried to interest herself in a current

magazine. But she was too nervous to read.

The flame of the candle flared and sputtered in some sudden draft. Mrs. Roy glanced toward the windows. They were closed. Contrary to her usual habit, she had forgothen to open either the door or the windows before retiring. However, the flame burned brightly again. Mrs. Roy continued reading. There are many drafts in old houses, she told herself.

The candle fischered again and died down to a blue flame. Dank, bleak shadows menaced the corners of the bedroom. The flame went out. She fumbled for a match and relighted it. A few instants—and then again the flame was extinguished as though souffed by unseen fingers.—Beyond the engulfing folds of darkness Mrs. Roy sensed some unknown presence.

BELOW, the grandfather clock struck the three-quarter chime. It was fifteen minutes before twelve o'clock. Then out of the silence came a cry—a cry shrill and penetrating although far distant, a cry hardly human yet seemingly born of agony.

Mrs. Roy waited in the darkness. For a few moments, silence—and then it

came again.

It was somewhat closer now. Mrs. Roy felt for her matches. They were gone. She fumbled for the candle. That, too, was gone. She tried to call her son. The words died in her throat. Out on the mountainside some strange Thing was abroad, and she

was powerless.

Again the cry came—again and again.

It was closer now—closer—closer. Other
noises intruded into the night—noises seemingly muffled by the dark blanket of gloom
enshrouding the Ocean-Born Mary house.

The sound of horses' hoofs—the clink of
harness—and, high above_all, the strange
shriek that rose and fell. It was very near

the house now.

Suddenly she recognized the weird sound
with a derisive smile. It was nothing more
than the screech of an axletree badly in

need of grease.

She settled herself back comfortably in bed, thinking that some farmer was passing along the road, and then remembered—the

spectral coach and four!

The darkness lifted or else she imagined it. Out on that old dirt road some indistine mass, blacker than the night, was passing slowly by, a smudge against the shadows rendered pasty-gray, perhaps by emanations of some psychic illumination which

set the Thing off in dull relief against the hillside. The sound of the horses came distinctly—the screech of the axle was just outside her door. It stopped, as though invisible reins were jerked by a coachman, And then the cavalcade resumed its journey.

Suddenly, down by the old apple tree, beside the haunted well, the shadows thickened into an opaque mass. It looked like—it could be—a stage-coach—the stage-coach that was said to pass that way, bearing a phantom with the body of a beautiful

woman and the face of a devil!

There it lingered, silent except for the occasional clink of metal. Forms gathered in the darkness—shadows perhaps—but forms they looked in the dusky night. And, among them, one stood out sharply—a tall form clad in flowing garments, seemingly waiting—

A sound below stairs—the grandfather clock boomed forth the hour of midnight. The night outside was suddenly clean and undefiled. Stars peeped forth. The shadows beside the well had disappeared.

Downstairs a door opened. Something

fell with a dull thud to the floor. A stair creaked. Another and another. Some Thing was climbing the stairs.

The bedroom latch clicked. There came a draft of chill, cold air—salt air suggestive of the sea.

Mrs. Roy turned. She leaped to her feet. The door of the bedroom was swinging

slowly open!

The floor trembled beneath her. Mrs. Roy had considerable difficulty in maintaining her footing. The room—the bed—the ceiling—all were tipping. It grew as light as day—and Mrs. Roy found herself in unaccustomed surroundings! Clothes, hanging on wooden walls, swayed and swing with an undulating motion. It was almost as though she was on board a shipe.

She was on a ship! Through an open port-hole she caught sight of water—a smooth, placid expanse of water stretching

as far as she could see!

SOMEHOW everything seemed perfectly logical although she realized that she had no rightful place here. She was just present in a detached sort of way—a spectator.

A woman came into the stateroom. Mrs. Roy stared at her. She was dressed in flowing gray robes, with white neckerchief and a plain white cap. The visitor did not seem to see Mrs. Roy and the latter tried to

speak. Words would not come. The woman hurried out of the room.

Mrs. Roy glanced about her. Everything was crude and rough. Near-by was some sort of a table fastened to the wall, with an inkstand of antique design securely attached to the table. Close by were quills and a sanding box. She noticed an unfinished letter, written in quaint copperplate script, and her eyes traveled tilly over

She started suddenly and looked again, almost unable to believe. The letter was dated 1720.

1720! There was no mistaking the figures. More than two hundred years ago! There it lay on the table untouched, un-yellowed by age. There must be some mistake! Yet, there was the letter. She picked it up. Her eyes glanced over the closing paragraphs, noting the old-fashioned wording and the long "s"s" that looked like "Eg".

Truly not much of real import hath transferred fince you bade this little group of emigrants Godfpeed that day in Londonderry. All of us, 'tis true, are looking forward with impatience, fearce concealed, to this new country of which we have all heard fo much.

of total new new as means in means to make to of late, however, Capt. Whish has been fore prefied, as for many days now we have lain becalmed a few hundred leagues from a town in this new country known as Bofton. The captain has piled on fail ofter fail, yet it availeth us naught. Day after day's we drift. It may be the Lord's will, yet the need of difficult in fail from the young and comely wife of Capt. Wilfom is from to become a mother.

In fact—

The sudden fretful cry of a very young infant rang out through the ship. Mrs. Roy opened the door and stepped out. All was commotion. Women were running back and forth. Members of the crew stood by with an auxious yet sheepish air.

A NOTHER door opened. A bronzed man, dressed in the seafaring clothes of the period, stepped forth. It was Captain Wilson. Capable of coping with most situations, it was evident that he had at last encountered one phase of life in which years of commanding a vessel helped but little. He carried himself with dignity, yet his features, drawn and wan, showed the

strain that he had been under during the last few hours.

There was a moment of husbed expec-

There was a moment of hushed expec-

"It's a girl," he said. "And the Lord willing, they both will live."

From the crow's-nest in the rigging above there came a sudden cry.

"Sail, ho!"

The captain became instantly the man of action.

"Where away?" he shouted.

"A few points off the main beam."
As yet the tiny sail could not be seen from the deck. Apparently not a breath of air was stirring. The sails hung limp and useless. Yet hour by hour the tiny patch grew until it could be seen from the deck without a glass. The ship came closer and closer, a long, low, sinister craft.

THE blood-red flag of England was run up the halyards. The stranger displayed no colors. There was something menacing and uncanny in its steady approach while the English ship lay motionless.

Captain Wilson became worried. Groups of emigrants gathered on deck, watching. Members of the crew stood about, looking with lowering brows toward the craft.

There came a puff of smoke from the strange ship—a dull report!

A shot ricocheted across the smooth expanse of ocean. It dropped beneath the surface with a sullen splash a few hundred yards ahead of the ship. Simultaneously a flag burst forth from the rakish craft. It was jet black and displayed the dread skull and cross-bones!

"Pirates!" somebody cried. "Pirates!"

The cry passed from mouth to mouth. Pirates! And they were unarmed. Captain Wilson was no coward. He

gave orders that mustets, cutlasses and side-arms be served to all able-hodied men. Meanwhile the lane between the two ships was gradually narrowing. An air of suspense spread over the doomed ship, Several of the women grew hysterical. Others prayed.

Crowds of men, armed to the teeth, could now be seen standing on the decks of the pirate ship. Hardened dogs of the sea they were, thirsty for blood and hungry for plunder. Standing a little apart on the bulwarks was the pirate chief—dirks and pistols thrust in a vivid slik sash—bits of burning tow stuck in ears and whiskers—a leveled pistol in one hand and a cutlass in Captain Wilson in a grim, steady voice. The two ships crashed. Swarms of pirates climbed over the side of the helpless vessel above which the flag of England hung limply. The crew fought bravely but they were outumbered and speedily disarmed. Several of the most likely women were huddled to one side while the pirates looted and plundered to their hearts' con-

tent before scuttling the ship. Captain Wilson and the pirate chief met

face to face.

""JOUVE captured us through sheer strength of numbers," the Englishman said in a low voice, "We're ready to die like men but there is one request that I make of you which I trust you have sufficient manhood to carry out. In my cabin there is a young woman who has just given birth to a child. Whatever is in store for the rest of us, I beg of you to treat them gently."

The pirate's eyes narrowed.
"Where are they?" he said at last. Captain Wilson led the way below deck. Behind him, cutlass pounding on the wooden

stairs, thumped the pirate captain. They went into the room where Mrs. Wilson lay weak and helpless.

"S'blood," the pirate croaked. "S'blood!

What have we here?"

The mother looked at him with imploring eyes, one arm vainly shielding the tiny bit of humanity that had come into the world only a few hours before. The pirate

pushed her to one side and bent over the child.

Captain Wilson's hand stole toward a

pocket where a pistol lay concealed. If may have been the burning bits of tow in the pirate's whiskers, although babies are not supposed to see during the first few hours of their life; it may have been the gleam of the dangling golden earrings. It may have been a hundred or one other things but, anyway, the child, instead of creeping toward its mother, gurgled gleefully at the pirate and extended one chubby hand.

"God's blood," he swore weakly. "God's blood." The hard, grim lines on his face relaxed as he took the child in his arms and turned to the waiting father with a

"I'll spare the ship and all on board on one condition." The father's face grew doubtful but the pirate now positively beamed with joy. "Give me leave to christen this child. That's all I ask."

A few moments later a strange crowd gathered on deck,

On the quarter-deck stood the pirate chief, gingerly carrying the new-born child. Beside him stood the father. On the deck below waited the crews of both ships. Beyond, the emigrants watched with wonder-

"I christen you 'Mary," the pirate said—
"Mary, for my mother. And as you were
born on the high seas, let your name be
Ocean-Born Mary. May your life be long
and happy. May only misfortune come to
those who seek to bring sorrow into your
life."

life."

As the two ships drew apart some time afterward, Mrs. Roy drew a deep sigh of relief. But all auxiety was not ended. The pirate ship put to, and a small boat filled with men was launched. All wondered if the christening had been merely an idle jest and if now the plundering would commence in real earnest. With mixed feelings they in real earnest. With mixed feelings they

watched the boat come alongside.

A bolt of greenish-gray silk was tossed

on board, followed by other gifts.

"A present from the captain for Ocean-Born Mary," the one-eyed coxswain said.

"Tis goods for her wedding dress—and may the sun shine brightly on that happy

occasion!"

The deck tilted. The wind freshened.
The sails were bellying out. Suddenly
everything faded. Mrs. Roy felt herself

slipping—lipping—
It was daylight when Mrs. Roy awoke in her bed at the Ocean-Born Mary house. The early morning sun lent a cheerful touch to the somber, old-fashioned furnishings. The scent of the apple blossoms from the gnarled tree near the well was wafted through the miraculously opened window, filling the room with fragrance.

Downstairs, the door from the Eagle Room into the kitchen again stood wide open.

A BOOK had fallen from the bookcase during the night. It lay on the floor opened—face down. Mrs. Roy picked it up. It was the history of Henniker which she had obtained the day before.

The history was open at the story of the birth of Ocean-Born Mary and her christening by the pirate chief. The facts, with the exception of the letter, were substantially the same as those strange scenes

which had unfolded themselves during the night!

Later Mrs. Roy learned that the gray silk given by the pirate to Ocean-Born Mary had been actually worn by her when she was married to Thomas Wallace in 1733 and that a piece of it is still preserved in the Henniker Public Library.

THERE was a long pause when Mrs. Roy finished her sensational story—a pause that was eventually broken by Mrs.

Roy herself.

"That was the way I first met Ocean-Born Mary," she said, "Although I have never seen her in the material sense, I feel-I know her quite well spiritually. Furthermore I am sure she is near and happy, because since that might I have had great contentment of mind. Yet that first experience made me wonder whether or not I was going to like to live here.

"I was not afraid. Love had east out any fear which I might have had at first, and I waited eagerly for her return. She didn't manifest herself to us, however, for quite some time, although the door in the Eagle Room was found open frequently and the stage-coach made several visits.

"In the meantime we were very busy fixing up the house. From the first we planned to restore this old manson just as it was during Ocean-Born Mary's lifetime. We searched the neighborhood for furniture that had belonged here originally, and bought it back. It is our intention to make this house a musetum show-place of that period of American lile, so that not only may the name of this famous New Hampshire woman be perpetuated but also people may see and appreciate how our forefathers lived.

"We had come to the selection of draperies. I confess we didn't know just what to do. Up in the old loom room were spinning-wheels and looms which had belonged to the Wallace family, but we didn't know how to use them. The only alternative seemed to buy material that really was not historically correct. Half in jest I remarked to my son that I wished Ocean-Born Mary were here to help us.

"That night, before going to bed, I happened to go into 'the loom room. I had only a lighted candle. Suddenly it flickered and burned low, just as the candle did that night when I heard the stage-coach. This time I shielded the flame—in time to catch sight of some movement beside one of the spinning-wheels. I did not feel any feer.
"Protecting the flame as best I could, I
made my way over to that corner of the
room. There was nobody there; but the
wheel, said to have been owned and used
by Ocean-Born Mary, was turning as
though somebody had just left it!

"That settled everything in my mind.

"Although neither of us knew anything about spinning or weaving, somehow we picked the art up and now we are reweaving exact duplicates of the rugs and mats which once covered the softwood floors. Most of the flax and other material is spun on the hand looms; the dyes are made from roots, barks and plants growing in the vicinity. Many of these dyes were originally Indian formulas. Many times when weaving, I would be undecided about the pattern-and then I would feel a presence near me and a sudden inspiration would tell me what to do. Since then I have discovered that Ocean-Born Mary was an expert spinner and weaver. Spiritualists have told me that we learned this craft through Ocean-Born Mary's spiritual guidance.

"From that time on I have felt that Occan-Born Mary is always with us and I am never lonely or depressed, because I always have company. Many times when either my son or myself approach some of the doors which are partly open, they swing entirely open as though propelled by unseen hands. At night I hear the latch of my bedroom lift and the door opens slowly, just as it did on that first occasion. The stage-coach passes quite frequently at midnight, but it never bothers us any more because we feel that Occan-Born Mary is content to be with us and her comings and goings are none of our business.

"JUST last week an interesting thing occurred. No one had been in the Lafayette Room for several days, and we were showing the room to visitors. I looked at the bed and there was a place on it where it seemed someone had been lying down. Even the visitors noticed it and said it looked as though someone had been lying on the bed.

"Other strange things have happened which convince me that psychic influences are at work. Last summer I was waiting for my son to come home from a long trip. It was late in the afternoon and, as my work was finished, I sat in the window awaiting his return. Suddenly the dog's stall began to wag. Over the hill in the dis-

tance I heard the horn of my son's car. "The dog's tail wagged faster. He looked at me and then stared eagerly out of the window. Presently my son's car came into view. He waved as he passed the house. I saw him turn down the lane leading into the shed where he kept the car, and heard the squeal of his brakes as the car came to a clattering stop. The dog whined and ran to the door. I opened it. He sprang through while I followed leisurely behind.

"Suddenly the dog barked in worried fashion-short, sharp, anxious barks. He whined. I knew something was wrong and I hurried. I turned the corner of the lane and stood in shocked surprise.

"There was no car there!

"The dog ran about in excited circles, sniffing. The hair on his back became erect. I felt a cold, prickling sensation

along my spine.

"I knew I had seen my son's car. It was painted a peculiar color and had other characteristics that distinguished it from cars of the same make. And I knew it had turned down the lane. I was afraid he had been in an accident. I had read of such things.

"Three hours later my son drove into the

yard. "'I'm sorry I couldn't get home any sooner, Mother,' he said. 'I was awfully afraid you would worry and I wished we had a telephone so I could get in touch with you to let you know that I was all

"This sort of thing happens so frequently that we think nothing of it, although we never had similar experiences elsewherenor here, for that matter, until Ocean-Born Mary had made her presence felt. Very often when one of us is alone and wondering about the other, this same thing happens, apparently to reassure the one at home. The queer part of it all is that usually the absent one is hundreds of miles away and totally ignorant that anything has happened until home is reached."

It was growing late. Boston was almost a hundred miles away. The photographer had taken all necessary shots as soon as we

arrived. We arose to go.

"This is the room where Ocean-Born Mary slept," said Mrs. Roy. "Right where you are sitting are the marks on the floor made by her bed. Just behind this room is the kitchen. There is a heavy lock on the adjoining door, but this is the door we find open the most. Then we know that she is

with us again."

We left thoroughly convinced that the Roys actually believe that the spirit of Ocean-Born Mary has come again to help bring the joy of living to the lonely house on the mountain top where only terror and death lurked for so many years. Just before we turned the corner into the darkness, we looked back. Lights, tended by loving fingers, shone out from the windows as of old, and we felt that the spirit of Ocean-Born Mary had indeed come back to a real home.

As for the rest-who knows?

The Kaiser's Messenger of Doom

MANY of Germany's believers in spirit manifestations insist that phantoms. contrary to tradition and general belief, are not always dressed in white. Several have declared they have encountered apparitions whose raiment, though of the customary filmy texture, was blue, yellow, green, purple and even red. In support of this contention they cite the "Red Woman" of the Hohenzollern family, perhaps the most widely known ghost in all Germany.

It is alleged that this specter, always in

brilliant red, appeared time and again during the World War to the Kaiser, members of his family and some of his leading military officers, and that disaster befell the Hohenzollern armies immediately thereafter. In the flesh the woman was a Baroness but she died many years ago. In her lifetime she was connected by marriage with the reigning families of Baden, Karlsruhe, Brandenburg and Darmstadt. She also appeared to recent generations of these families to warn them of impending trouble.

My Bewitched Lover

Dick lay in a coma and no doctor could help him. But l—l dared to brave the terrors of the Other World for his sake!

HERE are still those who do not believe in ghosts. Perhaps I would not, if I had not had experiences which prove to me beyond a doubt work for good, and sometimes for evil, just like human beings.

My dear mother died when I was quite small and at the age of fifteen I lost my father. My only living relative was my father's brother, Jasper Mason. Unfortunately he and my father had never been friendly, but although I had heard that Uncle Jasper had a mean and cruel nature, to me he appeared merely gruff and silent. By
MARGARET MASON

**Js told to
KEIL BATTEIL

BEWARE

After my father's death my uncle arranged for me to go to school in a distant town. He explained that he felt it his duty to give me an education, since my father—this he stressed rather resentfully—had died practically without a penny. Naturally I was grateful to him, although inwardly I wished he was doing it more from love than duty.

I seldom saw him and when I was eighteen I wrote him and suggested that I take a course in stenography so that I might earn my own living. He replied enthusiastically, very glad that I was anxious to stand on my own feet, and mentioning that this commonsense strack in me must have come from my mother as I certainly could not have inherited it from my father.

This saddened me, for I had loved my father and it seemed such a pity that a brother's hate should live on, even after the man at whom it was directed had passed away. (I had heard that one reason for my counce's bitterness toward my father was the fact that Uncle Jasper had also loved my mother.)

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About six months later I went to New York, equipped to take a secretarial position. My uncle immediately obtained a place for me in a lawyer's office and then made it plain that henceforth he would not be

it plain that henceforth he would not be responsible for me—financially or otherwise. Work filled my days and thoughts, and for a few months nothing of moment hap-

pened. Then two very unusual events took place. The first was romantic. A young lawyer joined our firm, and from the very first I liked him and he seemed to like me. Frankly, he was the first man whom I had ever really noticed, and immediately a friendship grew up between us which prom-

ised a greater fulfilment.

The second thing was the death of my uncle. This came as a complete shock and I felt a great loneliness at the loss of my last relative, although this feeling was partly offset by my new-found friendship with Richard Manly.

IT was with surprise that I learned that my uncle had left me a beautiful early American chair. I couldn't imagine why, for as Uncle hated Father I thought he would entirely ignore me, especially as he had more than once intimated that he would leave everything to his housekeeper.

But to leave a single chair certainly seemed strange! The lawyer told me, however, that my uncle had explained that he felt I should have it as it had been given him by my father. Hearing this, I immediately fell in love with the chair and yowed

that I would never part with it.

My romantic friendship with Richard Manly developed rapidly. We went frequently to dinner and the theater, and it was during dinner one evening that the conversation turned on my father. I had been praising his kindness and good nature and ended by saying that it was probably those very qualities in him that had left me

penniless.

Richard asked what I meant and I replied:
"Father died suddenly. A will, made only a few months previously, left me one hundred thousand dollars, but when the lawyers looked into his affairs they found only about three thousand."

Richard frowned as he said quizzically, "You mean he loaned it without collateral to someone who was mean enough to take advantage of his death and say nothing

about it?"

"I don't know," I replied, shrugging my shoulders. "The lawyers searched and advertised and did all they could, but nothing ever came of it. That was four years are."

ever came of it. That was four years ago."
"But surely-" Richard started to argue

the matter.

"It's no use," I interrupted gently. "It's a subject I'd rather not talk about. It only starts me thinking hopelessly, for there's no solution."

So the conversation drifted to other subjects and my disagreeable thoughts vanished in the joy of watching Richard's handsome face and laughing eyes.

It was quite late when we said good night at my door and I ran up to my apartment. Undressing quickly, I got into bed. I fell into a light sleep, troubled by hazy, disturbing dreams. It must have been about two hours later when I awoke with a start. My dreams had been getting worse instead of better and, after I was awake, I had a most uncanny sensation that I was still dreaming. I looked around and noted the familiar things in the room. I hnew I was awake, mind you, and yet felt that I wans. It is hard to describe the sensation but you must try to understand.

Lying there with my eyes open, I noticed a peculiar light in a corner of the room which was usually pitch-black. I looked intently, trying to figure out where the light came from. As I watched, it grew clearer.

Fascinated with horror, I lay motionless, my heart sounding like a pile-driver in my ears. With overpowering terror I saw the peculiar bluish light slowly condense into the figure of an old man!

The next moment the Thing began to

move toward me.

I shrank back into my pillow and seized the bedclothes with fingers cold with fear. I was powerless to scream, although I wanted to with all my might. Then, as the figure gradually came nearer, I realized that it was the ghost of my Uncle Jasper! There was no mistaking that heavy-featured bearded face with the small eyes set too

close together.

As I watched the wraith, my fear lessened somewhat, for the figure stopped a few feet away from my bed and I could see that it as trying to tell me something. Its head kept shaking and its arm moved as if motioning someone to go away. This gesture was repeated several times; then the form gradually dissolved, and in a few seconds the room was quite dark.

PUZZLED and weak with the shock of this vision, I fell into a troubled sleep and awoke the next morning with a fright-

ful headache and taut nerves.

I did not mention this apparition to Richard as I feared that he might think me an imaginative fool. In the morning light the vision seemed more like a nightmare

than a reality, even to me.

Had I dreamed the whole thing? Or had
my uncle's spirit really appeared to me? If
I had seen a ghost, what was its object?

A few days later Richard said anxiously, "Margaret, I hope you won't think I'm interfering, but I've looked up your father's will and tried to get some further information about his financial affairs."

I smiled and told him that I appreciated his effort in my behalf but that I was sure

it was wasted.

It was very sweet of him to take such an interest, but after the other lawyers had done all they could, I was not very hopeful that he would be able to help me.

That night I was once more troubled by vaguely unpleasant dreams. As before, I awoke in a cold sweat and saw that pecular light in the usually dark corner. Again my uncle's figure formed out of the uncamp bluish vapor and moved toward me. But this time the arms were raised and the hands elenched as if in anger. The Thing stood like that for a long time—staring at

I shuddered with horror as those beady eyes seemed to burn into my soul. Shivering, I watched and waited. For all I knew, the ghost might want to kill me—that terrifying glare of scorn might easily change into a look of murderous frenzy.

At last the arms dropped and the figure half turned away. Then the right arm slowly lifted and the index finger seemed to be pointing. My eyes followed the direc-

tion but I could see nothing.

Then the hand hegan to move up and down and a strange glow seemed to emanate from the end of the pointing finger. I watched, trying to figure out this gesture, when suddenly I realized that I was receiving a written message from the other world! The ghostly finger was tracing glowing, phosphorescent letters in the air!

I distinctly saw the letter "B" and then
"E" and "W." Gradually the luminous

letters formed the word:

REWARE

With tense nerves and my mind terribly excited, I watched that finger slowly spell out its message. After what seemed like hours, the finger stopped writing and the message was complete. Here is what I saw:

BEWARE OF RICHARD MANLY

For a few seconds the words remained glowing, then they began to disappear and it was not long before both figure and message had dissolved, leaving me in complete and devastating darkness. "Beware of Richard Manly! Beware of

Richard Manly!"

In my thoughts I repeated the words over and over. This time there was no doubt as to the reality of my astral visitation. I knew that my uncle's spirit had come to me. But why should it want to give me such a warning? Surely there was nothing wrong with Dick? And yet the spirit must have had a powerful reason for warning me. But what twas the reason?

MY head ached with all these queries and the answers I tried to form to them. It was all useless. The fact remained that my uncle who, although not ever pretending to love me, had at least safeguarded my welfare as a matter of duty, had come back to tell me something for my own good.

At last, with splitting head and tortured heart, I was forced to the conclusion that I had better give Dick up. He was the only man I had ever loved and would ever love; besides this, he was actually the only intimate friend I had. To sever connection with him would cut me adritt and leave me terriby lonely. There would be nobody else and I shrank from giving him up. Father, Uncle, and now Dick!

Then, with a sidening sensation, I realized that it would mean changing my job, too. I could not endure working in the office with Dick after breaking our friendship. I could not think of any worse torture! No! If I had to give him up, I wanted no lingering good-bys! Almost anyone can stand one blow—but long drawnout pain I had not the courage to face.

So, at the end of the following week, I quietly gave up my position and avoided seeing Dick. When I got home after that last day at the office, I lay down on the bed and cried for hours. Never to see him again! I twas frightful! For a moment! half decided to ignore the astral warning, But some power—greater than anything I had ever known—keep that warning vivid in my mind and I knew I must obey it.

It is easy enough to give up a job, but getting another one is a matter of time and torment. I scoured the city, pored over the newspapers, but no position offered itself.

With weary feet and tired brain, I came home one night and sank down on the couch, exhausted. My money was getting low and if something did not show up soon, I could not imagine what I would do.

I had never felt so blue, so lonely and so utterly downcast in all my life. I sat in the

chair that my father had given my uncle, feeling that by doing so I was a little nearer my father whom I longed for at that moment. I craved his tender, fatherly love and advice and I began to cry a little, not hysterically, just quietly—thinking of my dad and the happy times we had had together.

SUDDENLY I had a peculiar sensation that I was not alone in the room. I do not mean that I felt another person was there. Not at all, but I knew that something, some "presence," was with me. I tid not frighten me at all. Quite the contrary. It seemed to soothe my tired nerves and lighten my gloomy mood.

I heard a voice that seemed to come from far away and yet was as clear and definite

as if it were quite close to me.

"Margaret !"

For a moment I was startled, for I knew that voice beyond any doubt! It was my father speaking!

"My heart goes out to you in your time of trouble," the voice said tenderly, "but you must keep up your courage."

My face was joyful as I nodded my head.

Oh, how I wanted to say something to Dad—

to tell him how wonderful it was that he could speak to me! There was no doubt in my mind as to the reality of this soice from another world. Perhaps it was my love for my father which brought his spirit so convincingly near to me. But I was afraid that my voice might break the miraculous spell which made it possible for me to hear him.

"Listen to these words carefully," the voice went on in more ominous tones, "for

they concern your whole life."

I concentrated with all my effort.

"In your uncle's house there is an old Italian desk. It was my personal desk. After my death, Jasper took it to his home, for his own evil purposes. In the back there is a secret drawer which is opened by a spring in the head of one of the figures carved on the left-hand side. The contents of this drawer you must take to someone familiar with business. You will learn much. Good-by, my daughter—"

The voice had already begun to sink into a muffled monotone. I caught the word "Margaret" again and then came complete

silence,

The desk! The desk! I must find it immediately. I could hardly sleep that night, wondering what was hidden in it.

The next morning I was thankful, for the first time, that I had no job to go to, for it left me free to search for the desk.

It took only a few hours to reach my uncle's home in New Jersey—which he had left, along with his other possessions, to his

housekeeper.

I was met at the door by the butler and I told him that I was calling on Mrs. B, (the housekeeper). He ushered me into an anteroom, where I cooled my heels for twenty minutes or so. Then I was admitted into the presence of the new mistress of the household and I explained to her that I wanted to see the old Italian desk that had formerly belonged to my father.

"You can't," she said abruptly. "I didn't like it and I had it sold at auction with some

other things."

I asked her gently if she would tell me the name of the auctioneer. By way of reply she summoned the butler.

saying meanwhile, "I can't do anything to help you. Good-by!"

Then she walked haughtily out of the

room.

Nonplused and charrined, I left my

Nonplused and chagrined, I left my uncle's house.

Sold at auction! Good heavens! I might never find it! By this time the desk might be in California or Texas. But I refused to be discouraged and made my way to the offices of the lawyers who had handled my uncle's estate. They might be able to tell me the name of the auctioneer.

Here again I met with discourtesy and delay, but I waited in that office for almost two hours until finally one of the members of the firm saw me in order to get rid of me. He gave me the requested information without even looking it up and, murmuring the name of the auctioneer, I quickly left the

office-building in pursuit of this latest clue. The auctioneer proved to be an old and kindly man. He listened to my excited questions regarding the desk with obvious amusement, and then he sent the office boy for some records.

"HES," he said, looking over the salesbook, "here it is. It was sold to Selwyn Sperowitz of New York City. He is a dealer in old furniture and his store is on Lexington Avenue. I warn you, though, he will probably charge you plenty for that desk."

I returned to the city late in the afternoon. In order to search the secret drawer I would be obliged to buy the desk, and I had no money. Not knowing the contents of the drawer, I would not dare share my secret knowledge with the antique dealer.

In my despair and anxiety, suddenly I thought of Richard Manly. He, I was sure, would listen to my story, and listen sympathetically. But what of my uncle's warning! Should I disobey it?

I THOUGHT the situation over carefully, I must disegrad either my uncle's warning or my father's command. Needless to say I decided to ask Dick for the money. I wrote him a note saying that I had something very important to tell him. The next morning I received a telegram asking me to meet him at luncheon. It was wonderful

your uncle, I would have told them it was the bunk. But I know you are not the type of girl who would kid yourself about such things. However, I can't give any explanation of your uncle's warning. Perhaps had some plan of his own for your future which he was unable to tell you about before he died."

I thought that very unlikely. Then I asked Dick bluntly if he could help me out about the desk.

"You bet I can," he said eagerly. "But please, dear—" his hand covered mine— "whatever happens, don't let's ever be separated again."

Looking into Dick's eyes, I determined bravely to disregard anything the spirit of

In the weird darkness an uncanny warning came to Margaret Mason. Dick Manly was unworthy of her trust!

But she loved Dick-loved him with her whole soul!

Should she give him up—and lose her one chance at happiness and love? Or should she disregard the sin-ister message?

WHICH would you have done?

to see him again. I could have cried for joy! Poor Dick, although overjoyed to see me, was still unhappy and hurt at my treatment of him. To drop out of a friend's life, as I did out of Dick's, is enough to hurt and puzzle anyone.

I decided to tell him the whole story and when I had finished I said:

"If you can understand, Dick, what I've been through, perhaps you'll forgive me?" He was very sympathetic and forgiving—

He was very sympathetic and forgivingglad enough, he told me, to forgive anything, now that he knew what it was all about.

"As to your uncle's warning," he added, "it's a mystery to me what it was all about. I can only say that if there's anything against me, I don't know what it is."

I knew he was telling the truth and inwardly I thanked God for his straightforward reply.

"I must say, dear," he went on, "that if anyone but you had told me this story of

my uncle might say about him. For me he was the only man! And that should be enough to give confidence and fearlessness

to any girl.

As soon as possible we visited the antique dealer. We made our inquiries as casual as possible. The man remembered my uncle's desk very well, for he had bought several pieces that my uncle had owned. But he had already shipped it to Boston to an

associate dealer who thought he could get

a good price for it.

Dick took the initiative.

"WELL," he said, "that's too bad. You see, I'm a relative of the former owner of that desk and I didn't know that it had been sold at auction. I always liked it and want to buy it. Could you sell it to me now, and have it shipped back from Boston right away!"

The dealer rubbed his hands with greedy satisfaction. Of course he could sell it and the price would be a mere \$2,000. I had to smile as I saw Dick's expression. Two thousand dollars! It was awful!

Dick gave me a quick glance and I nodded my head. If the man had said twice that much, I would still have nodded. wrote his check and the man gave him a receipt and promised that the desk would be delivered in three or four days.

Outside the store Dick mopped his brow.

GEE whiz, Margaret," he said, with a worried frown, "my bank account will just about cover that."

I smiled at him. "You're a brick, dear, and I know it'll come out all right. Father must have had some very strong reason for urging me to secure that desk."

"You mean something about his will?" Dick asked with sudden animation.

"I don't know," I answered quickly, "But there's much more to it than we

imagine-of that I'm sure." For the next day or so we were forced to await developments in fretful impatience. The following evening Dick brought his sister to see me. We had been chatting and sipping coffee for some minutes when I noticed that Dick had become very quiet. I turned to look at him and saw that he was quite pale. Anxiously I asked him if he felt ill. He looked at me silently before speaking.

"I don't know, Margaret. I feel verv

weak and-and stifled."

I ran and opened a window and told his sister to get a glass of water. Then I tried to help him to the window but he couldn't move.

He slumped forward in the chair-unconscious!

I grabbed the telephone and called for an ambulance.

"What can be the matter?" I asked his sister. "I never knew him to have an attack like this, did you?"

"Never," she replied anxiously. "I can't

understand it. I'm frightfully worried." I tried to reassure her but I was trembling myself with nervous fear. The ambulance came but the doctor could not bring Dick back to consciousness. I asked what was wrong with him.

"It may be indigestion," he answered hesitantly, "although I've tried all the usual

remedies without result."

So they took the unconscious form of poor Dick away in the ambulance and left his sister and me terribly worried and helpless.

I got almost hourly reports from the hospital but they were all the same. He was alive but very weak and still unconscious.

The next morning I went to see him but there was still no change. I sat by the bed and held his limp hand and tried to talk to

him, but he did not stir.

The doctors admitted that they did not know what was wrong with him. I almost laughed hysterically when they said that, but they told me gravely that X-rays had been taken and no reason could be discovered for his coma. They questioned me about the coffee he had drunk and I told them that his sister and I had had the same brew. It was a complete mystery.

The time for the arrival of the desk came and passed (Dick had directed them to send it to my house) but I received no word from the dealer. I determined to go down and see him again. I found his wife in charge of the store and I showed her

the receipt for the money.

"Where is the desk?" I asked impatiently. She was a shrewd-looking Russian and she was as familiar with the business as her husband. But she knew nothing about the sale of the desk to me. She explained that her husband had been taken suddenly ill two days before. He had awakened in the middle of the night, shouting that an old man with a horrible face had been trying to tell him something. Then he had rolled over and become unconscious and was still in that condition.

I listened to this explanation, at the same time trying to decide how I could get the desk at once. Little did I suspect that there was a direct connection between the desk and the dealer's illness. I was in a frenzy of impatience and asked the woman to write out a telegram to their agent in Boston which I would send. She vielded to my urging and in a little while I was rushing to the telegraph office.

THAT afternoon I went to the hospital to see Dick and found his condition was unchanged; he was still unconscious and as helpless as a baby. It was terrible!

I went home and tried to compose myself. but I could not get that desk out of my mind, much less Dick. Suppose that the telegram went astray? Someone in Boston might buy the desk before the dealer there knew that we had bought it. I simply could not sit and do nothing-the suspense was too awful. So I quickly counted my money and then took the subway to Grand Central. where I purchased a ticket for Boston. The next morning when I awoke, I was in "The Hub." After eating breakfast, I

went to the address of the dealer to whom I had sent the telegram. Yes, he had received the wire and had dispatched the desk the night before. My trip had been for nothing, but I was glad to learn that the desk was safely on the way to New York.

A S soon as I got back to New York, I went straight to the hospital, hoping to find Dick improved; but there was no change in his condition. Worried and unhappy, I tried not be hopeful and to believe that Dick would surely be himself in a day or two.

A day later the desk arrived and was

unpacked in my room.

You can imagine my excitement as I walked slowly around it, gazing at it and

gloating over it.

At once I began searching the heads of the figures carved on the left-hand side. I pressed each one, trying to find the spring which would release the secret drawer. None of them yielded to the pressure of my fingers. Then I experimented with the figures on the right side, with the same result. A little discouraged and baffled, I sat down on the floor beside the desk, staring at it. What if, after all, I had only dreamed about my father's message! Perhause the desk had no secret drawer!

Determined not to be skeptical, I applied new energy to my task. With infinitely more patience and care than the first time, I pressed the head of each figure with all the strength of my hand. When I pressed the second one there was a click and I saw a panel slide back, revealing a drawer handle. With my heart beating fast I jerked at it and a long, narrow drawer slid out. It was filled with papers, some old and vellow, some fresh and new.

Trembling with excitement, I tore out the papers and spread them on the floor. Suddenly a black book with gold lettering caught my eye. I picked it up with eager fingers, instantly recognizing it as one that I had often seen my father writing in I examined it and found it to be a sort of combination diarry and business note-book. Most of the entries related to financial matteres. I found nothing of particular import until I came to the page headed May 17th, 1922. Under that date was this entry:

After much persuasion I loaned Jas-

per \$50,000. He has promised interest at a much better rate than elsewhere. I was loath to agree to this but he was so insistent that finally I gave in.

Hurriedly I scanned the book again but found nothing that seemed important until, under August 22nd, 1922, the following caught my eve:

Jasper wants to borrow another \$50,000. He says that things are going so well with him he wants to expand. He needs capital. I shall decide in a day or so.

I turned a few more pages and came on an entry made a few days later:

Gave Jasper the second \$50,000. Got his note for both amounts—payment due next March. He offered a special bonus of \$5,000, to be paid when loan is refunded. I decided this was well worth the small risk I take in making the loan.

One hundred thousand dollars! I repeated it aloud slowly. This was the very amount which was missing when Father's will was probated. Was it possible that my uncle had managed to cheat my father? I quickly turned the pages of the diary to March, 1923. On the 25th I found this:

Jasper's notes are four days overdue. He assures me that everything is all right and he will pay in about a week. I don't doubt his statement that his money is tied up at the moment.

That was two days before my father had so suddenly and unexpectedly died of heartfailure. There was no further entry.

L WAS puzzled and distressed beyond words, but more than anything else I was excited, for my intuition told me that I would find more than my father's diary before my hunt was over. I searched hastily among the papers on the floor. I caught ily among the papers on the floor. I caught catch in my breath I separated a paper from the others—and found that it was one of the notes!

Breathlessly 1 scattered the papers about until I found the other note for the same amount. Then I examined them. On each note was Uncle Jasper's signature, as clear as day!

I could no longer shrink away from my suspicions; I could no longer shield my unele from my own scorn and bitter loathing. He had deliberately cheated and robbed my father! Before the lawyers could get their hands on my father's private papers, Uncle Jasper had moved Father's desk to his own home, for secret and undisturbed examination of its contents. He must have known—or assumed—that his notes to Father were in that desk; that they had not been turned over to Dad's lawyers. Perhaps Uncle Jasper knew that the desk had a secret drawer and wanted time and secreey in which to discover it.

TWO things stood out with deadly reality:

my uncle had laken the desk for his own
my uncle had laken the desk for his own
we'll purposes—just as Father toly flat
had—but he had been foiled by Fate! He
had—not found the secret drawer and its
tellale contents. He must have felt secure
before he died, however, because the settlement of Father's estate showed the deficit
of \$100,000 but my lawyers were entirely
unable to trace the missing funds.

From beyond his earthly grave Uncle Jasper had come to me for the obvious and wicked purpose of frustrating any chance of my discovering the truth. Little did he count on my father's spirit returning also to protect me against his brother's evil de-

signs. Surely it was some sort of duel of spirits, one good and one bad!

Suddenly a wave of deadly fear swept over me. Suppose my uncle, knowing (as he must know) what had happened, determined to halk my plans in some way so baleful and sinister that I would be powerless to protect myself against his sevil spirit. He might even try to cause my death if he had the power to do so. I had beard of

such things happening.

I shivered and trembled; and my thoughts, flying to Dick, stumbled upon a horrible possibility that had not before occurred to me. I felt myself auddenly overpowered by the conviction that my lover was bewitched, that his strange and unexpected collapse was due to supernatural forces. Uncle Jasper, determined to prevent Dick from assisting me in discovering the facts, had worked some diabolical spell. God only knew how this evil influence could be counteracted. And the antique dealer! I understood now what had caused his sudden illness. He was another obstacte to Uncle Jasper's plans.

At that moment I felt myself grow calmer and I spoke aloud the one word: "Faith!" I must have faith in the power of good over evil. My father had already found a way to help me, and he would help me to save Dick. Good is always stronger than evil,

if one has faith!

It ohe has rain!

Then my mind returned to the question of the large sum of money which was mine by legal and moral right, and which unadoutedly was now in the possession of Unice! Is poer's hateful housekeeper, who had come to be a support of the law, it was already too late for me to recover my father's small fortune. Dick could have helped me, but until he was well again I could not depend on him. Where to turn I knew not, but I fell asleep that night without a qualm of fear or doubt. I fell—even with my conscious mind—the presence of my father, ready to help and protect me.

Perhaps I only imagined that I slept that night. Soon I became aware of a presence in my room which brought with it peace and love. I knew instantly that my father was there and that he would tell me what to do. Very faintly I heard my name spoken as if from thousands of miles away. Then the

voice sounded nearer and clearer, and I heard my father saving:

"My child, you have found what I directed you to seek. My desk was taken by my brother after my death because he wanted to get hold of the notes and destroy all evidence that the money was mine—and therefore yours—and not his. Now the law will

see that the wrong is righted."

I think I must have spoken—asked my father's spirit some question about my uncle's haunting me—for presently my

father said:

"UOUR uncle was a student of the occult for years. He knew that some spirits can only haunt the living through the medium of material objects once owned by them. He wanted to have power to control any acts of yours which might frustrate his own earthly plans, so he left you that chair. It was through the chair that he had power to visit you."

I remember asking my father if Uncle Jasper had done anything to injure Dick.

"It was the chair," came the ghostly reply,
"Dick was sitting in the chair. Jasper
feared him, so he got him out of the way,
You may trust Dick Manly, my dear. He is
utterly trustworthy. But you must burn
both the chair and the desk at once. Jasper
lied when he said that I gave him that
chair. When those two eardly mediums

have vanished, Jasper will never have power over you again. Good-by, my child!"

The voice had grown fainter with each word, although it was all clear and understandable. Oh, how I hated to have my father leave me that night! But all fear and doubt had disappeared. I could scarcely wait for morning and the work that lay before me.

First, I arranged with friends to have the desk and chair burned in their furnace. Then I hurried to the hospital.

IN the long hall outside the private rooms I was met by a nurse who told me with friendly briskness that Dick was all dressed and ready to leave the hospital. The doctor had been called a half hour before and he had found his patient completely normal and well. Though surprised and puzzled, the doctor was glad enough to see Dick entirely recovered, and certainly he could not prevent his leaving the hospital.

I cannot describe that reunion between Dick and me. We sat right down there in his hospital room and talked over everything. I told him all that had happened and what Father had told me. Then we hurried away to my apartment where I had locked

up the notes and the diary.

Dick read everything, then he grinned at me in sheer delight and told me that we would have no trouble recovering father's money --- my inheritance! knew law and he had known of similar cases-similar from the legal point of view. My uncle had committed a criminal act but, as he had since died, the suit to recover the money would have to be brought in a civil and not a criminal court. However, in spite of these complications, Dick knew that everything could be adjusted and the money recovered and turned over to me.

"And just think, Dick," I cried excitedly at that point, "things would have worked out very differently if Father had not come back to warn me and advise me what to do."

Suddenly Dick remembered something. He said, "Wasn't it just about the time I first talked with you about your father's will that your uncle's spirit visited you?"

I nodded, quickly seeing the drift of Dick's question.

"No wonder he warned me against you!" I cried. "He was afraid you'd discover what he had done. Oh, what a devil Uncle Jasper was!"

There is little more to tell. We brought suit against the housekeeper, the beneficiary of my uncle's will. The evidence I was able to produce convinced the court at every point. Dick acted as my attorney and when he won the case it was a double victory for me-a double reason for love and pride and happiness.

COMETIMES when our conversation with friends runs to spiritualism and interesting tales of occult happenings, someone is sure to ask if we believe in ghosts. Then Dick will look at me with a smile in his eyes, and say:

"Well, to tell the truth, I never saw a

ghost, but my wife swears that she hastwo of them, in fact!"

Then, when I am pestered with the questions of the curious and the unbelieving, I always shut up as tight as a clam, for I will not talk for the amusement of skeptics. My story-my experience-such as it is, is reserved for those who read or listen with an open mind and an understanding soul!

A New English Ghost Arrives

THE people of England who take a par-ticular interest in ghosts—and their number is legion-are much excited over reports of a mysterious phantom which is said to have made its appearance at Portchester Castle, near Portsmouth, one of the most perfect specimens of the old Roman type of architecture in existence.

This specter was discovered by a woman,

who insists she witnessed its first appearance at the castle some months ago. She describes it as a crusader, fully accoutered in armor. The ghost appears to have fixed upon the place as one he intends to haunt for some time, for the same woman declares she has seen it several times since, always kneeling on a spiral stairway as if in prayer.

The Specter in the NIGHT CLUB

The pretty dancer stood on the brink of dishonor. Only her lost sister could know the fatal step ahead? Can a sister's love triumph over death?

T was New Year's Eve. Drifting into my office from the great hall of the night club below came echoes of an ever increasing bediam of mingled melody, laughter, babbling voices and an occasional cheer—a jumble of merriment from my guests who were waiting impatiently for the coming of the midnight hour. There had been a time when such a rumble of gaiety would have set my pulses to poinding with a sense of extreme pleasure—satisfaction that I was providing New York with the maddest and merriest rendezvous along its Great White Way.

But in recent years this celebration had served only to depress me. For it was an anniversary which brought back most painful memories—regrets for a past which could not be recalled.

could not be recalled

Three years before, on New Year's Eve, Grace Wheeler, my principal dancer, had done her numbers for me for the last time. Then she had left for France—against my wishes—to join her fiancé.

And she never had returned. Death by accident had claimed her a few months later—claimed her just as she was upon the threshold of what should have been a glorious womanhood.

There were many things in addition to Grace's beauty and splendid qualities which had endeared her to me.

I had known her and her younger sister, Fay, since they were babies. After they were left orphans in their early girlhood, I had tried to be a second father to them and had learned to love them both as though they were my very own.

That was why each recurrence of New Year's Eve had brought me sorrow. Nothing which the celebrations offered, no promise which a dawning new year could hold.

served to offset my grief.

Perhaps, on this night, my depression should have, been lessened a bit by one happy thought. For Grace's sister, a pretty little elf who had succeeded her as' the night club's star dancer, had that afternoon told me something which meant that one of



Ву

RANDALL COLLUER

As told to EDWIN A. GOEWEU

my greatest hopes was to be realized. Showing a beautiful brilliant which flashed upon one of her tiny hands, she had told me that the night before she had promised to become the wife of her dancing partner, Jerry Barrett, who had been her constant cavalier since their school-days.

Finally I decided I must do my utmost to forget my regrets in rejoicing over the happiness which had come to my other "daughter." For perhaps the hundredth time since coming to my office to calm my jumping nerves, I consulted my watch. Eleven! Only sixty minutes more and the big hour would arrive. I must be with my guests before then.

Tossing aside my cigar, I crossed to a window, threw it wide and drew several long breaths. Then for the first time I learned it was snowing—softly, lightly, the great flakes dropping lazily upon the shufiling, jostling armies of merrymakers ebing and flowing through the streets, their cries rising above the racket of horns, clackers and classons.

Refreshed and almost convinced I had regained my poise, I closed the window. Then, with shoulders squared, I left my office, pausing upon the little balcony just outside and looking down into the wide hall below. Everywhere was a riot of color. For my guests, in keeping with the custom at the New Year's fête, were mostly in fancy costume. Festons of rainbow lights, stretched from wall to wall, made the place light as day.

Caught by the carnival spirit, I forgot all care for the moment and smiled. My eyes wandered to a spot directly beneath me. In a cleared space on the dance floor,



surrounded by a solid wall of cheering men, and women, Jerry and petite Fay were capering to the melody of the newest blues.

Satisfied the dancing part of my program was being well taken care of, I glanced elsewhere to note if my other orders were being carried out. Nothing seemed amiss until my gaze rested upon a great bank of palms near the foot of the stairway.

THEN, on the instant, I turned giddy and something seemed to be filling my throat and choking me. For, behind the palms, peering out at the dancers, was—Grace Wheeler! And she was in costume, as if ready to dash out upon the floor and do her numbers, as she had done hundreds of times in the never-to-be-forgotten past!

For a moment fear caused me to look away. If I hadn't clung firmly to the rail, I would have fallen. For—it was impossible for Grace to be there.

Fighting down an agony of uncertainty,

I forced myself to look again.

Grace was still there, watching Fay as intently as before, paying no heed to those

who passed near and seemingly attracting no attention from them. Merciful God, had we all been mistaken?

Was Grace still alive? I could scarcely credit the evidence of my eyes. And yet they could not trick me. had known her too long and intimately. Why, the very costume she wore was one I had designed especially for her,

Yes, it must be Grace-or- Horror again gripped me as I completed the

CUMMONING all the strength I retained, I dragged myself to the stairway, stumbled down and turned toward the palms. But there I met disappointment. Grace had disappeared. However, she could not

have gone far. Brushing aside the hands extended to grasp mine, I rushed about, looking eagerly for the missing girl.

Then I became aware that the music had ceased temporarily; that the dance floor was peopled with strolling couples. Circling these, so that I might peer into even the out-of-the-way nooks, I finally reached the opposite side of the dance floor. And there, from behind a pillar which afforded me some concealment, I saw something which turned my mood to blistering anger.

Near one of the tables stood Fay, obviously ill at ease, her hand held by a man who was proposing a toast with glass held high-a man whom I had not seen for a long time but whom I hated as no other

on earth, Carter Brill!

For it was this profligate son of one of the city's wealthiest families who had won the love of Grace and taken her from us. I had warned her against him. So had others. For we all loved her and were certain that as Brill's wife she would know

little but sorrow. But she would not heed.

In my heart I blamed him for her death. If she had not gone to Paris to meet him, she would have been living still, I told myself. Furthermore, I somehow suspected that things had not gone well with Grace prior to the fatal accident, when she was run over by an automobile. The body had been sent back to America but Brill had not accompanied it. We had received only one short message from him-a cable-and to me his brutal silence indicated that he had not lived up to his promises of reformation and that possibly he was glad to be rid of Grace.

And yet Grace hadn't died! I had seen her only a few minutes before, watching her

sister and the man who I was confident had failed in his pledges to her. What could it mean? Whose body had we buried?

Then, with stunning suddenness, I sensed the amazing truth. Grace was dead. What I had seen was-her spirit. Could it be that she had come back to protect her sisterfrom Brill? Was there a sinister meaning behind Grace's appearance at that particular

time?

But, my natural repugnance to crediting the supernatural gripped me again. For a moment I wondered if I were going mad, if hard work had finally snapped something in my brain. At that moment I felt a cool touch upon my forehead-as though an icy hand had caressed me. The touch quieted me instantly-calmed me so that I could again think clearly, though I remained weak and shaken.

I glanced about. No one was near me! But I yielded to what I no longer could combat. What I had seen was the spirit of Grace. And it had been close to me; its caress had relieved me from my fever of

Obviously no others had seen what I had -or there would have been pandemonium among these revelers. In permitting me alone to see her, it meant that she expected me to do something-unquestionably for

Fay. But, in heaven's name, what? Perhaps I was wrong in believing Fay was in danger from Brill. She loved Jerry too dearly for any other ever to wield an influence where her heart was concerned. And yet, if Carter were not concerned, why had Grace been watching him and Fay so intently?

WAS seized with an overwhelming de-sire to get away to some quiet spot, to be alone where I could think. My office was such a refuge. I left my place, hoping to escape unobserved. But many of my guests noted me. My name was shouted and cheered. Several moved toward me with extended hands.

Then a warning buzz sounded above the tumult. The lights snapped off, plunging the hall in midnight blackness, and all noise ceased. The world was upon the threshold

of a new year.

Out of the silent darkness boomed a single stroke upon a gong, followed by startled gasps and a woman's cry or two. I pulled myself together. I must take advantage of the opportunity and, if possible, get away before the other eleven strokes were tolled and the hall was again ablaze with lights. I knew the layout of the night club so well that darkness placed only a small handicap upon my movements. I made my way toward the stairway rapidly, counting the clock's strokes and apologizing in a

whisper to those I jostled.

Ten! Eleven! My groping hand grasped the rail I sought. Twelve! Amid a thunder of cheers, with the orchestra and the chimes vving to create a greater din, the lights flashed on. But I did not look about. I raced up the narrow flight, covering three steps at each leap, hurled myself across the hallway and flung the door wide.

BUT I paused upon the threshold, gasping. For huddled in a great chair near my desk and weeping convulsively was Mrs.

Dale, my wardrobe mistress.

At the sound I made she looked up, attempted to rise, then sank back, I closed the door and snapped the catch, wondering what had happened to so affect this elderly woman-a seasoned performer like myselfwhom I never before had seen under the stress of emotion.

"What is the matter?" I cried.

"Please, Mr. Collver, forgive me for coming here. I just had to! I wanted to tell you I'm leaving-tonight-right away."

"Leaving? Why? Has anvone annoyed----"

"Oh, no, sir. It's something else. Some-

thing I'm afraid to tell you, for you wouldn't believe me." Her words gave me a new jolt. Was it possible that she, too, had seen Grace?

Why not? Both girls had lived with Mrs. Dale from the time they became orphans. She still looked after Fay and accompanied her to and from the night club to the apartment they shared.

"Tell me what's on your mind," I said, my voice sounding harsh despite my effort to control it. "I'll believe anything you say

-but out with it."

"Tonight, within the hour, I slipped from the dressing-rooms to take just one look at the crowd. Fay and Jerry were dancing. The others didn't see me. They were watching Fay. Then, right at the foot of the steps leading to this office, I saw-"

"Yes, ves. You saw what?" But I knew what she was going to say and a cold sweat

broke out all over me. "I saw-Grace Wheeler, I mean, her

ghost." "Her-ghost? Woman, you're mad." I knew she was telling the truth, but I fought for time, struggling to gather my scattered wits so I could think clearly.

"I knew you'd say that. But whether you believe me or not, I know what I saw. For I saw a ghost once before, years ago, when my mother's spirit appeared to me just

before my father was killed," Why struggle longer against accepting the inevitable? Grace had appeared to two

of us whom she had loved dearly in life. But why?

"I hope you haven't told this story to others."

"No, sir," she replied, regaining a measure of calmness. "At first I was so frightened I just ran away-to the dressingrooms. I didn't dare stay there, though. But I had to let you know I was leaving."

"Listen, Minnie. Whether you saw a ghost or not, we cannot be certain-now, But if the phantom of Grace appeared to you, it did so for a purpose. And until that purpose is fulfilled, it probably will appear to you again, no matter where you may be. You are better off where there are many people near."

"Grace wouldn't harm me-she loved me," she said, speaking more to herself than

to me.

"I feel sure of that, And, besides, you cannot desert me now. I need you to look after Fay."

Mrs. Dale suddenly sat up straight and the fear in her expression gave way to anger. "Did you see who was talking to her down there?" she asked.

"Yes, Carter Brill. Now, tell me truthfully: has she seen him before, recently?"

"Forgive me, Mr. Collver-I should have told you. She met him in the street the other day. He told her he had just returned from Europe after a two years' stay."

112HY did she talk with him, considering how shabbily he treated us all after Grace's death?"

"I don't know. Probably because she is too kind to deliberately offend anyone. And he was clever enough to overcome some of her feeling against him by talking of Grace tenderly, insisting he never had recovered from the shock of losing her. She told me all this and I probably would not have thought much about the incident again if I hadn't seen him in the night club tonight."

"You should have told me at once." "I know that-now. But she made me

promise not to. She knows you dislike him

and feared you would be angry with her. But she was loyal to you. When Brill suggested that he be permitted to send her flowers, she refused and left him."

"The contemptible rat! First, it was Grace. Now it is Fay, who is younger and even more beautiful than her sister was when she-left us. Minnie, don't you see you can't desert me? You must continue

to watch over Fav."

SHE nodded her head slowly, and I knew that fear was again clutching her.

"If you think you see Grace again, tell me at once," I added. "But no matter what happens, keep close to Fay until I find a means to block Brill's game. Never leave her! Be with her whenever she leaves your home. And if she sees or hears from him again, notify me promptly."

"But when you were downstairs you saw him smiling and waving to her, didn't you?"

"Yes, and I'm going to stop even such familiarity. He hasn't done anything yet which would warrant my refusing him admission to the night club. But I shall put an end to his efforts to win favor with Fay. If necessary I'll have her marry Jerry at once, though she's still very young to take that step. You'll stand by me, won't you?" "Yes, sir, I will. For even if Grace comes

back she'll never harm me."

"Wherever she is, Grace still loves you like a daughter. Now, go back to the dressing-room and get ready to take Fay home. I'll send Jerry with you. Brill shall never

trick her as he did Grace, damn him." After Mrs. Dale had gone I smoked half a cigar to steady myself, then left my office, determined if Fay still was with the Brill party, to take such action as would cause her to leave for home before the revelers became too boisterous and he took advantage of the situation to do something which

would cause trouble. When I reached the balcony rail I looked down, half expecting to behold the phantom of Grace. But it was not there. However, halfway down the steps I encountered Jerry Barrett. An angry flush marred his usually

placid features.

"I was just coming for you," he said. "Why?"

"Look over there. Do you see who's at the table where Fay is sitting?" "Yes, Carter Brill. Why didn't you take

her somewhere else?" "I didn't know whether you'd given her permission or whether he just used his nerve to get her there. Besides, I didn't want to start anything on an occasion like this. But I'm tired of his fawning over her. If you don't get her way, I'll just have to---"

"Keep your head and follow me, I'll end this nonsense. Just you do as I direct, and then take Fay home in my car."

However, when I reached the foot of the stairway I was immediately surrounded by a swarm of guests, who insisted upon shaking hands and exchanging the season's greetings. I forced myself to laugh and chat with all I encountered, but steadily worked my way across the hall. Reaching the table I sought, I nodded to Fay, who arose instantly and stepped to Jerry's side, slipping her hand into his reassuringly.

Brill put out a detaining hand but I brushed it aside, paying no heed to his muttered oath. I whispered a few hurried instructions to Fay and Jerry; then, with my arms about the shoulders of my dancers, I piloted them to the center of the dance

Shouting for silence, I announced that my stars would do a feature number especially arranged for the occasion. The crowd fell back cheering, clearing the necessary space. I nodded to the orchestra and the dance was on. I noted that Brill forced his way to the front of the throng and applauded

loudly. But he made no effort to reach Fav. The turn ended in a crescendo of brass and a crash of drums and, grasping my performers by the arms, I quickly forced a lane for them through a press of cheering men

and women.

My chauffeur was dozing in the performers' lounging-room, and I instructed him to take Fay directly to her home. Jerry and Mrs. Dale were ready to accompany her.

AFTER seeing them safely to the car, I headed back for the hall, determined to do something to atone for my neglect of my guests. But, try as I might, I could not enter into the spirit of the occasion, though I managed to maintain a semblance of gaiety and good cheer. I hoped that no one noticed my frequent and furtive glances into the shadows.

However, by two o'clock I realized I couldn't stand up under the strain of makebelieve much longer. So I, whispered to my manager to take charge until closing time, then slipped away to my office and bundled myself up warmly. For I intended to walk to my not distant home in the hope that the cold air and exercise would revive both my vitality and drooping spirits. Then I

escaped by a rear door.

It had ceased snowing, but the streets were still peopled with happy and care-free rollickers who blew horns into my ears, showered me with confett and roared greetings. But I lacked the heart to reply. Each "Happy New Year" sounded like a mock-ery to me. Happy new year? Mine had begun with such uncertainty and trouble as I never had known before. And to fore-cast even the imminent future was impossible.

I SWUNG into a side street where there were fewer people. And as I trudged along through the slush my thoughts went back to the far-away days when Joe Wheeler, father of Grace and Fay, had been my intimate friend and stage pal. I never had married. The only woman I ever had loved had died before I was able to support a wife.

So, in my idle periods, I had spent much of my time at Joe's home and had learned to love the girls as though they were my own. I had put Grace on the stage in one of my companies. And, as I had no one upon whom to spend my earniags, I had insisted upon paying for Fay's dancing instruction and singing lessons. Then Joe and his wife had been killed in a railway accident, and I had placed the sisters in the care of Mrs. Dean.

Thinking of the old, happy days, I reached home before I realized the progress I'd been making. As was customary on nights when I was certain to be out very late, my man had retired. Tossing my coat and hat aside,

I went to the library.

As I had anticipated, the fireplace still held the blinking embers of a log fire. I drew a chair before it, warmed my numb fingers, then stretched back to try to solve my problem.

"I have been waiting for you, Randall."

I sat up straight in sudden terror. Surely

someone in the room had spoken.
"I am here. Look."

Slowly I shifted my gaze to a chair which stood quite close, a chair which I knew had been empty when I entered. And there, with a long cloak drawn about her, sat the phantom of Grace.

I couldn't hold back a cry. My temples pounded as though my head would burst and I grew giddy from the sudden oppressiveness of the room.

The phantom stretched forth its hands

and touched mine—held them with a cold grip which chilled the fever in my blood, calmed and revived me. Then, to my amazement, I noted the odor of violets, the perfume Grace always had used in life.

"Surely you do not fear me, Randall?"
It was the same voice, and soothing, as

Grace's always 'all berne.

"No," I replied, fc: her touch had acted like magic, driving away all dread, and I sensed culy that I was speaking to a dear friend. "But I cannot understand—I don't know——"

"No one on earth can really understand and very few are permitted to see us after we have passed on."

"But why are you here? Is it because

of-Carter?"

"Yes, Randall, because of Carter—and Fay, But I must explain. You must know the truth, all of it. Then you will understand why I have returned from the world beyond, why I am permitted to let you see and talk with me. Besides, I need your help."

"Anything, Grace—anything you ask I will do."

"Carter made me believe he loved me. I loved him, worshiped him, was certain I could help him find himself. When I joined him in France, we went to a small town where a ceremony was performed. Then, for a time, we were happy. At least I was. We traveled much.

"But in Paris he began to neglect me for other women. I reproved him. He laughed at me and continued his escapades. Then I threatened to leave him and return to America. He mocked me—told me our wedding was a sham, that the one who performed the ceremony was not a clergyman.

"Horrified, I left him and sent an attorney to investigate. He returned with what was my death sentence. Carter had tricked me as he had declared. I could not bear to return to you disgraced. So I permitted myself to be run over—killed."

At last, from Grace's lips, I had learned the terrible truth—a truth more damnable than I had suspected. Brill had been little less than a devil in human guise to so betray the girl who had given her all for love of him. And now he was trying to trick Fay.

A fearful anger gripped me. I longed to find him—make him pay for his treachery with his life. Then a new thought came to me. Grace had come back to do thatto make Brill atone for the past at the very moment when he was scheming against her sister.

"You-you have returned for vengeance?"

I gasped.

Grace shook her head. "No, I have come only to protect Fay. I paid for my folly—
for you all warned me against him—and that is over. But Fay is in great danger. Carter covets her as he did me. I know, for I am permitted to learn the exact truth. I have come to you, our dearest friend, for help. Promise you will protect Fay as you would your life."

"I promise gladly. But what shall I do?"

"TIME will show you the way. But you must not attack Carter except in Fay's defense."

"But you?"

"I shall be close, at all times, even though you do not see me. I will help you when you need me. Fay must be saved."

When I awoke, daylight was showing between the curtains. The fire had died completely and I was cold and cramped in every muscle. Then came thoughts of what had taken place in that room only a few hours before. For a moment I imagined I had been the victim of a terrible dream. But as I passed trembling fingers across my dry lips, I noted the odor of violets. My experience had been no dream! The phantom of Grace had been with me. I had talked

The few days which followed were a waking nightmare to me. But my efforts were devoted mainly to keeping my pledge to Grace. First, I had a long talk with Fay. And, though I did not tell her the whole truth, I made her understand that Brill's conduct had been responsible for her sister's death and that she, too, stood in danger from him. I'm sure she realized I was withholding something. But she did not question me—she only promised to avoid him absolutely in the future.

That evening at the night club she turned her back upon him deliberately when, at the conclusion of a dance, she was compelled to pass close to his table and he attempted to speak to her. I believe her snub only aroused all his selfishness and made him more than ever determined to win her.

The following morning this thought received support. Mrs. Dale intercepted a letter to Fay in which he declared he loved her "because she reminded him so much of her sister" and that he desired to marry her. This letter was turned over to me, as were the others which followed, sometimes as many as three a day, each begging Fay to send a reply to the club where he was making his home. These letters convinced me he was dangerous, perhaps half mad from his excesses, but as he never appeared at the night club I believed Fay was safe. However, to forestall him completely, I

finally called the girl and Jerry into consultation, and it was decided they would be married the following Wednesday in an up-town church, with no one present except Mrs. Dean and myself. I cautioned them to keep the matter a secret lest Brill learn of their plans and try to make trouble.

Through the remainder of the week, more of his crazy letters arrived at Fay's home. But the climax came on Saturday night, at a time when my dancing stars were on the floor. Mrs. Dale summoned me to the dressing-rooms and showed me a bouquet of roses which had just been delivered. Hidden in it was a note from Brill saying that he was about to leave for Europe, never to return, and begging Fay to meet him at the stage door after her final number so that he might say good-by. Sending for the door-keeper, I learned the Brill was waiting in his car, parked at the curb.

DECIDED to give him a lesson. I cut one of Fay's dances and sent her home an hour earlier than usual, with Jerry and Mrs. Dale to look after her. As they used the front door they were not intercepted. I did not close the night club until the small hours of Sunday morning, and I had forgotten all about Brill by the time I started for home. But I soon had reason to recall him. He had waited through all the hours since sending the bouquet inside. Seeing me at the rear door, he leaped from the car and demanded to see Fay. I told him blumtly what I had done and that the girl had been at home for a long time.

The crimson went to his hair and I thought for a moment he would attack me. "All right, Collyer," he snarled finally. "So far you've beaten me. But my turn

"So far you've beaten me. But my turn will come. Next time I'll be the winner, so help me."

The following morning I was aroused from a heavy, sodden sleep by the jangling of the telephone beside my bed. A glance at the clock told me it was nine, as I placed

the receiver to my ear.

The voice on the wire was that of Mrs.

Dale, and it trembled with agitation. Her first words awakened me more thoroughly than a shower. Brill had just called on the telephone and requested a talk with Fay. Mrs. Dale had replied that the girl had gone to church and would afterward visit friends for the day. His answer had been that he didn't believe her. Then he had hung up. "Was he sober?" I queried.

"I'm not certain. His voice seemed

thick and his tone was brutal."

"HE'S probably still overseas and hasn't been to bed. His calling up Fay was a drunken freak. I doubt if you will hear from him again today. But don't let her answer the phone-and if he calls again, ring me. I'll be here all day.

Being utterly fagged, I rolled over and soon was back in dreamland. It was well past noon when I arose. After breakfast I tried to read the newspapers. But thoughts of Brill and his persistent annovance of Fay would intrude. I must find some way of keeping him far from the girl until Wednesday, when she and Jerry would be married. Announcement of the ceremony in the papers. I felt certain, would cause him to avoid her in the future if he had a spark of decency left. If not, Jerry was the kind to inflict proper punishment.

Then I speculated as to whether I would make a wise move by letting it be generally known that the marriage was to take place. But I vetoed the idea. It might cause Brill to become ugly and do some disgraceful thing which would bring unwelcome notori-

ety to the young couple. Close to eight o'clock that evening I

was nodding in an easy chair, when the clatter of my phone bell brought me to my feet a bit startled.

It was Mrs. Dale. This time her voice

expressed great agitation.

"Oh, Mr. Collyer," she cried, "we're in trouble. Either you must come to us or I must send for Jerry." "What's the matter?"

"It's Brill, He's down in the street here. He came into the lower hallway and called up on the house phone, saying he was going to take a steamer at midnight and must say good-by to Fay. I told him she was not in. He said I lied and threatened to force his way to see her."

"Well?" I shouted, for she had broken off, probably too nervous to continue for the moment. Her voice shook as she continued: "I hung up. Right after that, the superintendent came to our apartment, saying Brill was drunk and they had put him out of the building. Then we looked out of the windows from behind the curtains. He was across the street, walking up and down under the electric light and looking up toward where we were. Shall I telephone Jerry to come?"

"No. That would only cause a fight and bring upon us the notoriety we have been trying to avoid. Have Fay dress for the street. I'll have my car brought around and come right up for her. Be on the lookout for me and have her hurry down to the machine as soon as I pull up before the house. Before Brill wakes up to what is going on, I'll whisk her away to my sister's out on Long Island. If he actually leaves the United States, I'll bring her back tomorrow. If not, I'll have her remain in hiding until just before the ceremony.'

Immediately I called the near-by garage where I kept my car, and ordered it brought round. Then I hustled into street clothing and was at the curb almost as soon as the automobile arrived. I dismissed the chauffeur and took the wheel myself. It was several miles to the apartment house in upper New York, but I was able to make considerable speed by keeping to the side

avenues.

ROUNDING the corner near my destina-tion, I noted a man directly across from the entrance to the house, pacing about nervously. As I drew to the curb, I glanced at him again. The man had paused. It was Brill. But I also saw something more disconcerting. Not greatly distant from him was his speedy light-blue car of foreign make in which he usually drove to the night club. I would have recognized it in a million. I wondered why Mrs. Dale hadn't seen it. Probably she and Fay had been too frightened to note it. If Brill followed me in that machine, I'd have a hard time losing him, though my own car was capable of doing some fair mileage. I hoped he hadn't recognized me.

My speculation was cut short by the appearance of Fav upon the walk. Brill saw her as soon as I and he guessed he was about to be tricked. Shouting an oath, he dashed across the roadway and leaped upon the running-board. I hurled him off, as Fay, badly frightened, stumbled into the car and dropped to the seat beside me,

But Brill was not in a mood to be easily discouraged. Cursing, he again mounted the running-board, striking wildly at me and calling to Fay that he wanted to speak to her.

"Take the wheel, Fay, and start the engine," I said, shifting my position and struggling to push our annoyer away.

"No you don't, Collyer—damn you!" he cried, clinging fast to my arm. "I came here to get Fay, and I'm going to do it!"

"GO away, man—you're attracting a crowd," I said angrily, trying to shake him off. "You're making a scene. And Fay doesn't want to talk with you."

"That's a lie!" he shouted. "It's you who are keeping her from me. You're trying to make her marry that cabaret hoofer. But she won't, I tell you-she's going to marry me. I'll kill her before I let her go to

him! I'd make her a lady."

Those who had gathered near began to jeer. I realized we had to get away then, if ever. And we were ready, for I could feel the car throbbing as the motor pounded impatiently. Jerking my right arm free, I shot it against the chest of the half mad man and sent him toppling.

"Start her, Fay-quickly! Head for the

Drive."

The car moved from the curb, gained speed rapidly and swung around the corner on two wheels. But I had seen Brill scramble to his feet and race for his car.

When we swung into the upper part of the Drive, 1 noted with misgivings that the traffic was light. This would count against

us if Brill picked up our trail.

In the first few minutes I saw no car which appeared to be following us and I took courage. But my elation was short-lived. Soon, from out of the shadows behind, I glimpsed a machine which pushed into view, coming rapidly. It gained steadily and I began to fear that our enemy was its driver. Within a few seconds my belief became a certainty. The automobile was light blue in color.

Leaning over, I urged Fay to make greater speed. The car responded. Then I received another jolt. The traffic light shead was set against us. But we did not hesitate and shot past the gesticulating policeman. I looked around. The pursuing automobile had done the same. Next I caught the shrill blast of the officer's whistel. Our one piece of luck was that he had no motorevele. But there was greater danger to keep in mind. The other car continued to gain. I could see its driver, swinging one arm widtly! Within another minute or two he would be abreast of us! And, in his mad mood, there was no telling what he would do. Probably he would dash into us or force us to the curb! In either case he would wreck our car and most likely kill us.

We shot through a patch of shadows cast by trees, then out into the light again. The other car was right behind us. I could see Brill plainly, though I could not hear the words he shouted. Nothing but greater speed would save us—and my machine was

already doing its best.

But the groan that welled up from within me died on my lips. For on the instant, coming from nowhere, another figure had taken its place beside the mad driver of the pursuing car! And I recognized that other figure as—the phontom of Grace Wheeler!

I may have cried out—I do not know. But my eyes never wavered. I saw Brill's arm go up and he struck furiously at the Thing beside him. But his blows met only

empty space.

Then, like a flash, the phantom reached for the steering-wheel. The next second the light-blue machine swerved, fairly leaped across the walk and crashed against the stone wall at the far side with a fearful rending of metal!

THOUGHT I caught a fearful yell, the shriek of a man done to death, as we raced on down the Drive.

"What was that?" cried Fay, who had

heard some echo of the sounds of tragedy behind. "I—I don't know," I gasped. "But for

God's sake stop. We've escaped Brill."

I was trembling in every limb when the

car jerked to a halt at the curb.

When I spoke, I could hardly control my voice. "I'm going back to learn what happened,"

I said unsteadily. "Drive along a few blocks until you can park in the shadows. I'll find you."

Dragging myself out of the car, I started back up the drive, striving to put speed into my steps as I heard excited cries, the shrilling of police whistles, and the clatter of running feet.

Finally I reached the place where the car had crashed against the wall. It was a mass of smoldering wreckage. A little crowd clustered along the parapet, pointing below and jabbering. I understood.

Brill had been thrown over the wall and no doubt had been dashed to death among the rocks and trees which dotted the steep declivity extending almost to the river!

Soon, from out of the shadows below, two officers and several volunteers appeared, bearing an inert form. This they raised to the wall and willing hands lifted it over and placed it upon the walk. I pushed my way to the front. A single glance was sufficient.

Before me lay Carter Brill, stone dead. "This is the fellow who drove like lightning by me a ways up the Drive," said one of the policemen. "He must have been crazy. I wonder who he is?" When I rejoined Fay, she appeared on the verge of collapse. I lifted her to the right-hand seat.

"It was Brill," I said. "His car ran on the sidewalk and was wrecked against the wall. They found him down below the Drive—dead. I'll drive you home now." I never again saw the phantom of Grace

Wheeler.

But I never can forget the series of tragedies which culminated in the death of Carter Brill. And each time I think back, I marvel at the all-powerful love of Grace for her young sister—a love which caused her to return from the other world to save her. And she did save her—at the very moment when Death had reached out and all but clutched her.

Hawaii's Ghost Light

MESSAGES received recently from Hilo, havaii, stated that another attempt is about to be made by white scientists to learn something definite concerning the mysterious akua lights, or ghost flares, frequently seen in various parts of Hawaii. Their beginning is legendary, but though efforts long have been made to ascertain something about them or the gods supposed to control them, none has yet offered a satisfactory explanation, and for such explanations as have been offered, no supporting proof has been brought forward.

Experiences with akua lights are told by educated white people who have sought to explain them. Brie Edwards, a prominent and respected resident, declares that he saw akua lights while on a fishing expedition with an Hawaiian helper recently. They had planned to ride to the shore and then tether their horses about a mile from the swimming hole. Just as Edwards had thrown the reins over his horse's head, he saw a light burning steadily upon what he and his helper knew to be a bit of flat country.

As soon as the Hawaiian boy saw the flare, he declared it an akua light, refused to go farther and insisted no fish would be caught that night. Edwards went on alone, circling an area which he knew to be free from rocks or caves or other possible hiding places. Gradually, he reduced the circum-terence of the circle so that he stood where the light had been burning. He discovered methine, even though two beginning his

search he had lighted his fishing torch so that there was no possibility of anything mortal sneaking away unseen. He then went on with his fishing, but by dawn he had not even had a nibble, not even a crab

taking his bait.

Mrs. Francis Wrigley, for many years a resident of the Kau coast, insists that in a cast in the coast in the

As he neared the place, the light suddenly vanished and although a close watch was kept, no one was seen to leave the premises. Upon entering the house a thorough search was made, but no one was found and nothing was disturbed. The lamp chimneys were examined, but were found to be cool.

Story after story of akua lights is told by persons claiming not to be superstituous and with no dread of ghosts. The older Hawaiians decline to discuss what to them are obvious manifestations of the presence of gods or spirits. The only thing upon which they will openly agree is that, when the lights burn the gods are displeased about something and that any venture attempted immediately thereafter will result in failure; perhaps tragedy.

The Red Curse of

Some uncanny Thing quarded the tomb of the dead Pharaoh but Lord Cairns was impetuous and unafraid. He learned too late the secret of the mummy!

ORD CAIRNS leaped back from the broken masonry of the tomb and slapped savagely at his left hand. Something fell to the ground and then scuttled away into the rocks. He made a wry face and scrutinized his wrist.

"The bloody little beggar-he bit me!"
The professor and I came closer. "What

was it?" I asked.

"A beetle, a scarab beetle, young fella-melad. They've always been thick as flies in this country. In the old days the Pharaohs used to hold them sacred and wear rings in their likeness. You've seen the stones? Very likely the old chappie in there"—he motioned toward the passageway that led down into the tomb—"very likely he's wearing scarab rings all over his fingers."

As he spoke, a shiver ran over me. I could picture the ancient mum-

my of the buried king, covered with jewels and ornaments in the likeness of insects—for a moment I could almost see them moving weirdly.

"Scarabeus Sacer," pronounced the professor, looking hopefully into the crevice where the beetle had hidden. "It was a rare sort, too. Did either of you notice the old

golden streaks on its back? Some people say that this particular beetle carries the cartouche, or signature, of the Pharaoh Amenophis on his back."

"But aren't you going to do anything for it?" I asked Lord Cairns. He laughed and shook his head. "Aren't they poisonous or anything?" The two little bluish wounds on

his wrist affected me strangely.
"They're harmless," he bold me. "It's
your first day here, young fella, or you'd'
have probably been bitten by several yourself. The rocks are full of the nasty little
blighters. They pinch when they're frightened, that's all."

It might be well to explain how I happened at this time to be so far from New York and my job on an aftermoon newspaper. Only a few weeks before, I had received a call from Professor Rowell Beames, an old friend of my father's. I had thought the professor was buried in his beloved Ancient Languages at the University of Chicago, but it turned out that he had been asked to go to Egypt and take part in the anticipated opening of the newest tomb discovered in the Valley of the Kings.

He wanted to take me with him as a sort of assistant. The dear old man was writing one of his everlasting books, and it was his plan that I should aid in keeping his notes and arranging things for him. The magic of Lord Cairns' name had secured me a temporary leave-of-absence from my job, and we had arrived in Egypt twelve days later.

we had arrived in Egypt twelve days later.

There were four of us in that little party
encamped above the tombs of the long-dead

Egyptian kings, for Lord Cairns was accompanied by his niece, who acted as his secretary—Janet was her name. Then there were a couple of native house-servants who took care of our tents, and the score of native fellaheen, who had been working for months along the cliff wall in an endeavor to find for the country of the

hoped to open there.

It was nearly dark when Lord Cairns was bitten by the beetle, and so we decided to call work off for the day. There was still a great deal of rock that must be moved before we could dare to go down the sloping passageway which we could see in the dim light of our electric torches, and the native workmen were growing restless.

The professor and I had arrived only that aftermoon and had stopped at the camp just long enough to deposit our belongings. But that had been time enough for me to decide that Janet Moore, the niece and secretary of our leader, was one of the most charming girls I had ever seen. Then the impatient professor had dragged me away in the direc-

the Mummy

Ву THEODORE ORCHARDS

tion of the excavating, leaving Janet smiling at us from beneath the double awning of the main tent.

That evening it did not take me long to become acquainted with Janet. Lord Cairns and the professor had been together in excavating before and Janet and I were dependent on each other for entertainment.

"I'm glad vou've come," she told me. get so tired of hearing nothing but tombs and mummies and dead things. Uncle has but one idea, and that is to exhume some peaceful Pharaoh." She shivered a little. "Do you know, I think it's ghoulish the way he tries to ferret out the poor dead Pharaohs. He would think it terrible if anyone went into the cemetery at home and started to dig up his ancestors." "But that's different," I put in. "This is

a scientific investigation-"

"Maybe for the professor. But not for Uncle. He just does it for the thrill, I think," She pointed to the native tents, below us on the slope. "I understand some Arabic, and the natives frighten me with the things they say. They prophesy that the first one to enter the tomb will die. If it had not been a dry season, not one of them would go on working, but they must take what they can get, or starve. The Nile did not rise much this spring."

Together we went into the tent, where Lord Cairns and the professor were making plans for the opening of the tomb-

"It will take about two weeks," estimated Lord Cairns, "before the natives can get the rocks cleared away so we can get down the passage."

"And then," put in the professor with a gleam in his eye, "then we'll know for sure whose tomb it is. If it's the tomb of Amenophis-"

"Who is Amenophis?" I asked. knowledge of Egyptology was confined to what I had read in press reports.



"Amenophis was the greatest king in the history of Egypt-or, at least, the most interesting. For he founded the first known religion to have one god, and one alone. Some scholars say he wrote two of the Psalms that appear in the Bible today. And he had but one wife, Nefertiti, who was the most beautiful woman Egypt ever produced. A statue of her was found last summer in the tomb of Ay and Thi, her parents. If this is the tomb of her husband that we are opening, it is probable that we will discover a wealth of jewels and artistic objects beyond anything ever collected in one room before-"

THE professor was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Bulo, our cook. He came directly to Lord Cairns, without knocking at the entrance.

"House-boy and me no like. We go tonight away from this valley. We want silver pay." He seemed sullen, yet fright-

"Nonsense, Bulo. What's the matter? Anything go wrong?" Lord Cairns smiled, but I knew him well enough already to see that he was inwardly furious.

"Go wrong?" Bulo laughed bitterly. "Anything go wrong? Huh! All the day nothing but beetles. Beetles in the tent. Beetles in the kitchen. Beetles running across the floor. We no like beetles. They bring bad luck. We no like being near tombs. No good. We want silver pay, yes?"

"A big chap like you afraid of beetles, Bulo? What harm can they do to you? Look at me-one bit me this afternoon. You can't see the mark. Get back to your tent and I'll see that you get a coin extra." Lord Cairns held out his wrist to the cook.

The man shuddered and ran from the room. Even from where I stood, across the table, I could see that the two spots where the beetle had pinched Lord Cairns had turned bright red! He looked down with

surprise.

"Superstitious beggar, Still, maybe I'd best be putting iodine on this. Where is it, Janet?"

SHE got him the tiny brown bottle and helped him dab the bright redness with the antiseptic.

"We'll send for new servants in the morning," he decided. "They are always quitting

in fear of the Valley."

I went to my mosquito-curtained couch that night with strangely mingled emotions. I was not at all sure what sort of a place I had stumbled into. For a long time I lay awake, staring at the canvas roof of the tent There was an atmosphere of above me. something impending-something which weighted down my chest and made it hard to breathe, though the night was cool.

When I fell asleep, my dreams were all of phantom beetles that turned into finger rings, and of bejeweled mummies that came walking out of opened tombs, gesturing to me to go away. And all through these dreams ran the thought of Janet, like a silver thread. I saw her in the tomb as the wife of the Pharoah, and wearing the scarab rings, and I saw her, too, warning me to go away from that place of doom.

Next morning all was bustle and hurry again. A messenger procured us more servants-a villainous-looking crew who assured us that they feared neither man nor ghost. I was a little reluctant to leave lanet alone, but Lord Cairns told me that she car-

ried a revolver and knew how to use it. "She's a rare girl, young fella-me-lad, and

it's the lucky man who'll marry her." He grinned at me. "Be sure you spend no more time over your typewriter than is necessary, for I'd hate to have her feel neglected here."

The work of removing the débris from above the tomb went on-with deadly slowness, it seemed to me. The natives moved leisurely and with obvious reluctance, and it was easy to see that if it had not been for their evident necessity, not one would have

gone near the tomb for any amount of money. It was a gloomy enough place, for all the brilliant sunshine that poured into it for nearly twelve hours a day. From eleven in the morning until three in the afternoon not

even the natives could stand to work in the sun. During that time we would take nans in the shade of our awnings, or drink cool liquids prepared by Janet, who was as ca-

pable as she was beautiful.

Janet and I soon became the best of friends, for the similarity of our ages and our interests drew us together. During the long twilight every evening we would take long walks together, while her uncle and the professor made plans and discussed technical matters. I came to care very greatly for this slim English girl whose calm brown eyes met mine so firmly.

And sometimes we sat outside the tent, and listened to the others as they argued over the fine points of Egyptian history-sat hand in hand, whispering of things less dead than

Pharaohs and tombs.

"I'm worried about Uncle's wrist-where the beetle bit him," she said to me one eve-"It doesn't seem to heal up as it should. He says that it doesn't bother him, and that it doesn't hurt, but why does it stay so red and inflamed? He won't let me do anything for it."

I had thought Lord Cairns had recovered from the tiny wound, and I was surprised to find him still marked by it.

"He told me the beetles weren't poisonous," I said.

"Then perhaps it's the climate-this hot dryness has a peculiar effect on everything. Such dreams I've had since we've been here -dreams of beetles and things-I imagined that they warned me away. Of course it's all foolishness."

I wondered, for I had had the same dreams. And, though I did not ask, I imagined by the look in her eyes that I had figured in her dreams even as she in mine.

WE were walking down through the Val-ley of the Tombs of the Kings, as it has come to be called because of the many successful excavations carried on there since 1900. By day it is a dry, hot oven but in the cool moonlight we found it wonderfully pleasant.

Hand in hand, we walked down the pathway that wound among the loose boulders. When we came to a rock that towered above all the others, we scrambled up and surveyed the whole Valley as if from a throne.

Far behind us we could see the tents of our party gleaming in the white moonlight, and the yellow glow of the kerosene lamps shone through them dimly. The professor and Lord Cairns were still talking.

Ahead of us, though we had not noticed it, was the tomb entrance, just underneath the dilff, which overhung it to some degree. We could see the heaps of loose rook and rubble which the men had succeeded in removing from the mouth of the tomb, and the framework of scantlings which had been built around one side of it. Behind the tomb was the dark cliff, thrown into intense shadow. Above this, the full moon stared at us until

But I did not believe it, and she sensed that I was talking to reassure her. "Don't go far. Please!"

I slipped down the side of the rock and and my way toward the cliff. I could still see, or imagine, at least, the wavering Thing on the vertical side of the cliff—and yet I knew that no living thing could find footing there.

As I got a little closer to the tomb, I stopped and rubbed my eyes. There was nothing on the side of the cliff! From top to bottom, now that I was in the shadow, I could see it stretch out lonely and bare. I turned to retrace my steps.

Did a weird doom follow the scientists who broke into the tomb of Tut-ankh-amen?

Everyone has heard rumors—but do you know the truth?

Here is the "inside" story of an ill-fated attempt to rifle the grave of another Pharaoh. Names are disguised for obvious reasons but the narrative is based on facts.

I could hardly keep from remembering the old superstition about people who go to sleep in the light of the moon—that they are moon-touched, and go mad.

Suddenly Janet caught my arm. She pointed to the tomb. At first, blinded by moonlight, I could see nothing in that obscurity. Then-I can never be sure whether I saw or imagined it—I seemed to see somewhite because the seemed as we see somewhite by the seemed by the se

Janet's fingers gripped my arm until it was numb. "What can it be?" she whispered quaveringly. "Do you see it, dear?"

A nameless feeling of dread came over me, and I knew then that nothing tangible, nothing real, was crawling up that side of

the cliff above the tomb.
"I must go and see what it is," I told her.
"Will you wait here?"

"Please--"

"It's nothing, dear. You and I have been staring at the moon too long, that's all," Just at that moment a scream came from behind me. Trying to focus my scattered nerves, I raced back across the stones to Janet. She was holding one hand to her lips.

"Tm sorry," she said. "It's nothing rat all to make such a fuss about. Something ran across my arm, and when I moved—it bit me!" She showed me the two tiny red marks that I somehow knew would be there.

"Your uncle said that the rocks are alive with beetles, and that we'd all get bitten before we are through here." I spoke in as casual a tone as possible but I was far from feeling sure of the ordinariness of everything. The fear of the natives, Bulo's evident terror of the beetles, and the weird dreams we both had had, to say nothing of the beetle-like thing that we had seen craveling up the cliff, conspired to make me wonder and fear.

I wrapped my handkerchief about her hand and wrist and made her promise to use antiseptics on the wound as soon as we could get back to the tent. Both she and I were aware of a deeper significance in all this, but each tried to reassure the other, and we came back to the tent pretending that we had imagined the Thing on the cliff. But the two red dots on Janet's hand were not imagined.

The time came, a few days later, when the last of the loose rocks had been removed from above the entrance to the tomb, and we could dare to think of going down that passageway on the morrow.

PROFESSOR BEAMES was jubilant. dr slall have wonders—positive wonders—to send to the Field Museum. If this is the last resting place of Amenophis, it will be the greatest find in the history of archeology. Whether it is his or another's, it will be of the greatest value to science. We shall be famous in every capital of the world.

my friends, when we send the news out to Cairo." He spent the evening in preparing note-books and cameras, in order to be ready to make records of everything that happened. Lord Cairns seemed in the grip of a terrible excitement. The sunny Englishman of

my first few days was gone, and in his place was a nervous, intense person who spoke seldom, dipping his words short and avoiding company when he could. The professor was so engrossed in his own plans and hopes that he did not notice, but Janet and I felt that something almost inhuman had come

over her uncle.

"Ever since the beetle bit him, in the tombentrance," she told me, "Uncle has been changed, somehow."

"And his wound hasn't healed yet, though your is quite gone." I pointed to the place on her hand where the beelfe had pinched. The two dots had almost disappeared. Lord Cairns had taken to wearing a glove over his hand, and he had resented any mention of it on the part of Janet or myself.

To me there seemed something inhuman about the man and his ferce thirst for excitement. He struck me as being the sort of person who would, as a boy, tie firerackers to a dog's tail—not from any particular cruelty, but from a careless desire for noise and excitement. There was something spoulish, I thought, in the relentless way he had spent most of his life ferreting out the long-buried kings and queens of bygone ages and gloating over their poor treasures and their little secrets.

He spent the evening pacing back and forth in the main tent, seemingly oblivious of everyone. Janet and I sat outside beneath the awning. She had promised, that night, to be my wife when our work in the Valley was over. Much as she wanted to tell her uncle, he seemed in such a nervous and preoccupied mood that we dared not. And the
dear old professor would simply nod and
smile at us, and then go on with his enthusiastic preparation for the morrow.

It was late in the afternoon next day before we were ready to open the thin brick wall that sealed the passageway. The native workmen were in as great a state of nervousness as Lord Cairns himself, but he drove them mercilessly.

Janet sat on a rock near us, waiting for the great moment, although she had lost most of her enthusiasm, as had I. But her uncle and the professor were as excited as children on a holiday.

Finally the staccato blows of a pick pushed through the wall and the bricks fell inward. With the impetuousness of youth I rushed

to the hole—but a dash of foul air bore me back choking.

Lord Cairns shook his head, "Not so

Lord Cairns shook his head. "Not so fast, young fella-me-lad. That air is three thousand years old."

We waited, for a few minutes. Finally

Lord Cairns made a ball of crumpled newspaper and lit it on one corner. Then he dropped it into the narrow hole. It fell a few feet, then bounced down sideways, till it was out of sight. But it did not go out. "It's healthy now," he announced. He was

not altogether right, if he had known.

not anogener right, it de had knowled Professor Beames was busy making a diagram of the mouth of the tomb entrance. Lord Cairns and I prepared to enter the sepulcher. I must confess that at the time I had no thought but that of gaining insight into the wonders that might lie beneath us. The lure of the unknown, and of buried treasure, is strong in all of us. Jane's face turned white as I started to lower myself into the dark hole, but I waved to her and went on in after Lord Cairns.

CLOSE at my heels was the professor. "I must see it, too," he gasped, as he scrambled down.

There was a platform about six feet down and then a flight of steps. Lord Cairns was ahead, sweeping the walls with his flashlight.

"Careful," warned the professor. "We must not disturb. Everything is of the greatest scientific value. A breath may destroy—" His voice sounded deep and booming in that narrow passage.

Step by step, we went down into the earth. I counted fifteen before we were brought up,

in a sudden sharp turn, before a door.

So far, the walls had been barren of any inscription which might tell the names and rank of the person buried here.

"Hurried funeral," decided the professor aloud. "The royal personage died young, be-

fore his tomb was complete.

But the door was sealed with a great seal. Lord Cairns pushed at it impatiently, but the professor thrust him aside, burning with

While we watched, he cast himself on his knees before the great seal and blew away the thick dust which was over it. By the light of his electric torch he hurriedly deciphered the characters of he royal car, touche. He turned to us. smiling with real-

"It is the tomb of the Pharaoh Amenophis!" he said. "It is the greatest discovery in modern history. And the seal has never been broken—the interior must still remain

untouched!"

ized ambition.

Lord Cairns clasped our hands in eager-

ness. "Come on—on to the interior!"
But the professor shook his head. He pointed to the elaborate wax seal, ornate with gold and paint, and bearing a long inscription.

"We cannot break this until it is copied and photographed," he told us, as one might speak to a very young child. "The tomb and its contents have waited three thousand years and more. They will wait a little

longer."

Suddenly the insignificant little professor had taken complete command of the affair. He seemed to take on new stature and an added gravity. For the science which he had made a part of him was so much greater than our personal selfishnesses that Lord Cairns and I both gave way.

"IT will take only a few days to make complete copies and photographs," the professor mused. "Perhaps I can cut around it and preserve the seal itself intact. It has always been found broken before, in other tombs."

I had somewhat naïvely hoped that the tomb and its secrets were to be immediately opened to us. I slowly climbed back to the surface, leaving the professor and Lord Cairns before the inner door.

As soon as I was above the surface, Janet caught me in her arms. "My dear," she said—"I was afraid that you would never come out." She shivered, though it was stifling hot. "I have a feeling sometimes

that we should all run away from this valley —before some frightful calamity befalls us."

I smiled at her fears, and told her of the passageway and of the great seal which the professor was so interested in keeping intact. Together we walked slowly back toward the tents. It was growing dusk and no more could be done that evening.

Our camp was situated on a little rise of ground about a half mile from the excavation where we had met success. Here Janet and I waited for Lord Cairns and the professor. We could see the little hushed group of workmen far to the west of us, standing dark against the yellow rock.

SUDDENLY I noticed that the natives were coming rapidly toward the camp in an excited group. Behind them were the professor and Lord Cairns.

In a few minutes they were all about, jabbering and gesturing excitedly. It seemed that they totally refused to work any longer at any price whatsoever; each demanded his wages immediately, so that they might get far away before nightfall. Lord Cairns made no effort to keep them, but gave each man his silver pieces and a farewell kick.

"Disgustin' blighters," he remarked. "Al-

ways frightened, these natives."

"Spooks, of course. They say, as far as I can make out, that the first person to open a tomb gets all the vengeance of the corpse, And they have no intention of waitin' for the fireworks."

The men had set off at a quick trot, still chattering excitedly like monkeys. Behind them raced two donkeys led by scared little

brown boys bearing their few belongings. As they passed over the cliff top, I saw one of them stop and bow twice-almost to the ground-in the direction of the excavation we had made. For a moment I was awestricken at sight of his obeisance to a king three thousand years dead. I remembered that, according to Egyptian philosophy, the dead wander about through eternity, or at least until the Judgment, and that they inhabit, while it remains, the body that was theirs while living. And if this body is lost or destroyed, the dead wander lost and homeless forever. When we went inside the tent we all started talking excitedly of the find we had made, and of its possibilities. Only Janet was silent, and after a few minutes of speculation about the value of our discovery I took her hand and we walked out under the awning.

"I can't explain," she said, "but I have a strange premonition that you-that all of

us are in danger. I hate this valley, and I hate what we are doing here. It has changed my uncle so I hardly know him. I don't see why he is so set upon dragging out the musty bones of some poor dead Pharaoh."

For some time we discussed these things. I did not tell her of the moment when I had seen the departing fellah bow to the tomb we were to open. In such moments it is the part of men to smile and reassure the opposite sex-to be superior and confident. But I felt very much as she did, now that the thrill of discovering the tomb was past.

INSIDE the tent the professor and Lord · Cairns were still arguing about the opening of the tomb's inner door.

It must not be done before the seal is removed and studied. Once broken, it will be lost to us, for the wax is very old. Why hurry so, my friend? The tomb has waited

three thousand years-"

Lord Cairns did not reply, but long after Janet had gone to her tent and the professor had climbed into his hammock, I saw him sitting at his table, staring out into the white night. His eyes seemed glazed and he appeared to be under some sort of a spell. His whole being was tense with excitement.

I watched him covertly from behind my curtain. Suddenly I saw him push back his camp-chair and rise. He walked over toward me, and I feigned sleep, for I did not want him to know that I had been spying. For a moment he stood over me, listening to my breathing. My heart beat so loudly that I thought he might hear it,

Evidently assured that I was sound asleep, he turned away. Taking a flashlight and a revolver from the table drawer, Lord Cairns raised the curtain of the tent and passed

outside. My first thought was that he intended to

stand guard over our discovery, which was a very wise plan, indeed, since so many natives knew that we had been lucky. crossed silently to the doorway and parted the canvas a crack. Lord Cairns was in the cook tent and I could hear him rattling the tool chest. In a moment he reappeared with a great hatchet which the native cook used for cutting meat.

Without looking in my direction he walked swiftly toward the tomb across the Valley. For a second I did not know what to do. I thought of awakening the professor, but then, after all, Lord Cairns was paying the expenses of the expedition and our permit to excavate was in his name. If he wanted to open the tomb, it was his business.

But the man seemed under great nervous excitement. Hesitating no longer, I slipped into my corduroy trousers and boots, and with an electric torch in my hip pocket I set off after him. The moonlight shone bright as day and so I kept close in the shadow of the cliffs. Lord Cairns was far ahead of me, walking swiftly. Over the boulders he climbed, with never a backward look. He was making a bee-line for the tomb of Amenophis.

The necessity for my keeping out of sight in case he should turn, kept me near the cliffs, where the going was harder. times I had to use the torch to pick my path and once I fell headlong across a big stone and lay for a moment with the breath knocked out of me. So he gained on me as he neared his goal, and when I arrived at the mouth of the tomb he was well inside and had already removed the barrier that he and the professor had put up in the afternoon.

I crept to the gaping mouth of the passageway and looked within. Far below I could see the glow of Lord Cairns' torch against the blackness. Then came the sharp sound of blows. He was crashing the hatchet against the inner door of the tomb!

In the afternoon, when we were all excited by our success, I had sympathized with Lord Cairns when the professor refused to allow him to destroy the seal. But now, in the cold moonlight, it seemed to be a betrayal for him to hack his way alone into the tomb. After all, our only excuse to open the place at all was a scientific one, and if the remains of the ancient civilization were to be ruthlessly destroyed, we were no better than the natives who had robbed so many of these tombs in the past.

THE monotonous beat of the hatchet in Lord Cairns' hands still resounded from the passageway. Leaning farther over the edge. I tried to see if he were destroying the wax seal or cutting around it.

But in leaning over, I had the ill-fortune to dislodge a small stone from the rubbish around the hole and it bounded down the passageway with a series of sharp crashes, The sound of the hatchet ceased.

I drew back, afraid that Lord Cairns would take a shot in the darkness. But in a moment his sharp face stuck out of the hole.

"Oh, it's you?" He smiled genially.

"Grab one of the picks there and give a hand, young fella-me-lad. We're goin' to wait for no deciphering. The tomb has never been opened, and I'm goin' to be the first!" He motioned toward the camp. "Professor wouldn't believe that I could get the seal off without ruining it. Watch me. I thought I'd make it easier for him by handing it to him at the breakfast table. argument then, y'know."

There seemed nothing else to do but take up the tool and follow him into the excavation. After all, it was his expedition. He had paid for the pick in my hand-even for the boots and trousers which I was wearing.

CLIMBED into the gloomy tomb entrance, carrying the pick. Lord Cairns had propped the flashlight on the ground, slanted upward so that it cast light on the seal. I saw that he was cutting through the soft sandstone around its edges, and trying as he had said, to keep it intact for the professor.

Together we worked for a few minutes. A thick, choking dust filled the narrow passageway and breathing was almost impossible. We tied handkerchiefs across our

mouths and worked on.

I was chipping away with the pick, on my side of the door, as carefully as I could. But things were moving too/slowly for my impatient companion. He thrust the hatchet in my hand and took the pick.

"Stand back," he said. "We're almost through. When this piece is out, the rest

will be easy."

With all his strength he swung the heavy pick against the door. At the third stroke I could see through the swirling dust that the rock was almost ready to fall. Then, with the point of the pick, he caught and pried it out. The great seal and the rock to which it had been affixed fell outward, breaking squarely across the middle.

He turned toward me, ruefully. "The professor was right, after all, my lad." Then he caught his hand to his mouth, choking. From the narrow hole in the door came a rush of the foulest air I have ever breathed. It was musty with the scent of long-dead things. It was pollution, decay and corruption, and all the worse because of the sickeningly sweet odor of mouldy spices.

Together we climbed into the air again

"Let's go back to camp," I suggested. "The

air will clear out by morning.

For some inexplicable reason I did not

wish to return to that dark doorway again. He shook his head. "I'm going through with it. The air will soon clear. And I-you and I-will be the first to enter the tomb chamber."

I have proved many times in my life that I am no coward. I would face man or beast with my head held high, if it were necessary. But I shivered as I looked back into that

dismal hole.

Real bravery would have been to have walked back to camp at that moment. But I was afraid to leave Lord Cairns, afraid to have him think me a coward. So I swung my heels in the excavation and wished that I were anywhere else.

After perhaps a half hour of waiting we returned to the doorway. I made a crumpled ball of paper, but Lord Cairns refused to allow me to light it and cast it into the tomb.

"The place is full of dry, decayed wood and cloth. A match might destroy everything-and choke us with smoke before we could get out. We'll have to take a chance

on the quality of the air."

With the tools we soon succeeded in prying out enough of the loosely plastered blocks of sandstone to permit our entrance. I carefully picked up the two pieces of stone that had held the seal and carried them out into the open. The seal was still complete and could be put together if the work were carefully done. Hardly any of the colored wax had come away, since it was bound with gold leaf.

When I returned, Lord Cairns was dragging out the last of the stones that made the door. Perspiration was pouring from his forehead, but he was smiling.

"We're almost there," he whispered. Excitement made him as tense as a coiled spring. "We'll soon have a look at this chappie, Amenophis."

HE wiped his forehead, and motioned me to follow him. The air no longer was particularly offensive. I bade a mental farewell to Janet and stepped after Lord Cairns into the tomb.

Our flashlights hardly helped to illumine the darkness of that place. Around us were piled varue heaps of blackness, which might have been royal furniture in some bygone day. Most of the wood had crumbled to a thick dust at our feet.

Here and there was the glittering of jewels reflecting the light of our torches. There was still the sickly sweet odor of spices in the air, almost enough to choke us.

The ceiling was very low and decorated, like the walls, with painted carvings. Our flashlights traveled swiftly over it, on to the far end of the tomb. On the floor next to the wall lay a great, dark mass which I suddenly knew to be the sarcophagus of the long-dead king. Around it was the shining alabaster of the canonic jars, which are supposed to hold the vital organs of the dead.

It was on a raised platform of stone, More than that, I could not see, for the utter blackness of the chamber choked off the feeble glimmer of our torches and cast weird shadows slanting away from us.

Lord Cairns spoke first, "Well . . .

young fella-me-lad, we're here!"

NODDED, feeling weak. I didn't want to be there. Anywhere in the world would have been preferable, if only it were in the clean outdoors. His voice boomed through the tomb and echoed shatteringly. A silence three thousand years old breaks terribly.

Lord Cairns moved around like a bewildered and delighted child before a Christmas tree. Everything that the light touched made him exclaim with wonder. There were great crumbling pieces of furniture, carved like animals. There were small jewel caskets, rotted and spilling their princely treasures on the thick dust of the floor. I followed him, still in the direction of the black sarcophagus, or coffin-case, that lay on the platform. A strange foreboding gripped my heart like an icy hand, but I did not turn back. Lord Cairns seemed so sure of himself, so much in command of the situation.

We stood together on the low platform. The outer sarcophagus was of carved gray stone, with a heavy lid. It must have been eight feet long by three feet wide, and the top was far more than one man could handle.

Without speaking, Lord Cairns motioned me to take one end of the stone. He grasped the other. But as my hands touched the mouldering stone, I drew them suddenly back as if I had touched a serpent. stone was burning hot to the touch!

Lord Cairns looked at me in amazement. "Hurry on, young lad. Let's get a look

I touched the stone again and this time my scattered senses found it no otherwise than any stone should be. Together we slid it over and down on the side where it crashed gently on the platform.

I shall never forget the sight that was revealed to me then. The inner casket had been made, as was the custom, in the like-

ness of the man who was to occupy it. For a moment I thought that a human figure lay there and then I saw that it was cleverly painted wood and cloth wrapping. face was that of a young man, singularly handsome and commanding. This was the sort of man who could have started a new religion and written two of the Psalms, as historians say that Amenophis did.

I instinctively leaned forward, as if to touch the thing and assure myself of its reality. But as my hand hovered over it, I heard a faint scream ringing in my ears. It seemed to come from an infinite distance, but I knew it to be the voice of Janet! I paused but a moment to look at Lord Cairns. He had heard nothing and was gloating over the richness of the casket.

"Ted!" came the sound of Janet's voice again. "Ted!"

I turned and ran toward the entrance. There had been fear, and imminent danger. in the sound of that dear voice.

Lord Cairns looked up in surprise. "Hi! Where y'going?"

But I did not pause to explain. His hand was poised over the richly painted casket which contained the mummied body of Amenophis-his eyebrows were raised in an almost comic surprise. I shall always remember him so, for it was the last time I ever saw him.

Just as I came into the open air, which was dim with the ghostly white light of dawn, there came a horrible choking sound

from the tomb behind me!

I heard the confused jumble of many voices speaking in an alien tongue-and at the same time choking gasps from a throat I knew to be Lord Cairns. I stopped, paralyzed. I knew there was no living human near, except myself and Lord Cairns!

THE gasping screams continued for a moment. Shudderingly they died down to a thin, eerie whisper-and then silence.

I could not help but return to my companion after that. Though my mind was reeling, I dragged myself back down the

steps of the tomb. I stopped at the doorway, my blood congealing in my veins.

Across the open sarcophagus lay the twisted body of Lord Cairns. I knew without thinking that he was not only deadbut worse than dead. Around him, in the little circle that my flashlight made, moved strange, vague figures-enormous, shining beetles . . . great human figures with the heads of beasts, figures that resembled the

ancient statues of the Egyptian gods . . . and, in the center of the uncanny group, the misty figure of a tall, kingly man, wearing the robes of a Pharaoh!

All this I glimpsed in a flash, for I dropped the flashlight and turned to leap up the

services as I was nearly at the top, a thundering reverberation choods behind me. The
walls hewed out and fell around me with a
great shattering of stone. Thick dast was
everywhere. I fell partly out of the entrance hole, exhausted. Behind me the
tomb and passageway was a mass of débris.
There, to this day, lies the body of rash
Lord Cairns, together with the body of the
Phranch Amenophis. Strange bedfellows
... the ghoul and the dead ... the hunter
and the hunted?

BRUISED and shaken, I made my way back towards the camp. Soon Janet came running towards me in the early morning sunshine. Her strong young arms were around me and she was helping me along.

"What happened?" she was saying. "I had the most terrible dream . . . I saw you in fearful danger and could do nothing. I woke up screaming and trying to hold you

back."

I told her part of what had happened, and how her voice had come to me as a warning across the Valley in the vault of death. But only to the professor did I tell the whole story of the Things that I had seen above

the broken body of Lord Cairns. Wakened out of sound sleep, he was unable at first to understand what I meant, but the blood and my torn clothing convinced him soon that something unusual had happened, and in a few moments the old man was up. We went back together to the excavation. In the broad light of day there was nothing out of the ordinary there, except that the cliff had collapsed into the sunken tomb and that the passageway was buried under tons of rocks. Any attempt to enter the tomb through the passageway was impossible now.

There, where I had carefully placed it, was the great seal of Amenophis, broken across the middle. So the professor got his seal after all, although it was the only one of the tomb's treasures that he or anyone else has yet gained. Patched together, it lies today in one of the nation's great museums as an example of hieroglyphic design.

Reports were given to Lord Cairns' family in London that he had perished in a fall of rock—which was enough of the truth.

Professor Beames left the Valley of the Kings sorrowfully, both because of the loss of his friend and because of the temporary failure of his great work. But I understand that he returned last fall to the Valley, to take up once more the work on which he has set his heart, and to try to find another entrance to the tomb of Amenophis. It will take more than a year to lay bare the surface above the tomb, for modern excavating methods are impossible and the fellahene are slow. But the work goes on, for science will not be denied.

Except for our natural feeling of sorrow at the passing of Lord Cairns, Janet and I were happier to leave that barren spot than anything else in the world. Nothing could have made us remain for even a day in that place of horrors.

We were married shortly after in the offices of the American consultate at Cairo. Since then we have lived quietly and happily here in New York, with no hint on the part of either of us of longing for more adventure, though Professor Beames suggested that we might care to join him when the tomb is opened again.

Janet has been a wonderful wife to me. Never once have we quarreled. But I think that if we ever did, the memory would return to me of the night when her voice came through the distance to save me from a terrible death. I shall remember always the hour-when her love proved stronger than the powers of this world or the next.

If our souls had not been in complete harmony that night, I should have placed my hand on the wrappings of the sleeping Pharaoh, and I should have quickly lost my reason and my life as poor Lord Cairns lost his. And in what strange world is he today?



Suicide or --- What?

James MacGuckin, U. S. Customs Guard, fired too quick at a fleeing stranger—and he paid a hundred times for that fatal shot!

NOTE: This is an authentic interview with the mother of the Castons Guard who shot and billed Leo Boice on Pier No. 2, at Hoboken, New I errey, Just 1day. Here, for the first time, is given the complete story of the supernixural events that followed the tragedy. Readers of the New York newspopers are jumiliar with the facts a reported in the press, and any curious person can corroborate the story by consulting the files of the New York Times or the New York World.

HEY have called my son a killer and a coward because of what his duty forced him to do. But when I looked into his face for the last time, I knew that he had paid the price in full. And no one will ever know the fear and remorse he felt, for I was the only person he ever told of the things he saw.

It all began when he got his first job. Jimmy was a serious boy, and all his life he had put his best into whatever he was doing. At school he was always the hardest-working boy in his class.

Many young men drift from one thing to another, but Jimmy waited until he got a chance to be a Customs Guard and then put his every effort into making good at it. I hated to have the boy go into such work. But he insisted it would be just the right place for him, and for a long time he was happy in his work.

It was the afternoon of July 24th, as he told me later, when he was walking along Pier No. 2, in Hoboken. A few days before, all the Customs Guards had received a severe lecture and had been ordered to stop the liquor traffic at all costs. The instructions were meant to make the lazy men work harder, but Jimmy took every word to heart. As he walked down the pier, he was hurning with indignation on account of the "bawling out," and he was eager...prinaps too eager... to prove his efficiency.

Jimmy wanted to be the best guard in the Customs.

So when he saw a gang of

suspicious-looking characters, he ordered them to halt. Instead, they all started to run. One of the men was carrying a -
bundle, and he dropped it. There was the crash of bottle glass and the smell of whisky. My son again ordered the fleeing men to stop, just as





any policeman would have done. Then he drew his gun and shot, intending, he swore to me, only to frighten the men into halting. It was what he had been ordered to do.

I would give anything if only that bullet had gone wild in the air, as Jimmy in-tended. But fate was such that the man who had been carrying the liquor fell in a heap. Three days later Leo Boice died in a Hoboken hospital. No one can feel sorrier than I do for his poor wife and children, who are, like me, the innocent victims of undeserved tragedy. For my boy Jimmy never would willingth yake killed anvone.

The death of Boice made many people feel that only Jimmy's life could satisfy justice. They called him "Hair-trigger MacQuackin," and everyone blamed the poor boy for what he had been forced to do in the line of duty. No one said a word about the official order to shoot runn-runners on sight. Jimmy took his orders too seriously—he was too good an officer.

Jimmy was arrested, but finally the Customs went his bail and they let him come home to me. But it was a different Jimmy from the boy I had borne and brought up. His spirit was broken.

The first words he said to me were: "Mother, he came . . . he came back to me in the jail."

"Who came back to you?" I hadn't the slightest idea what he was talking about.

"Boice, the fellow I had to . . . to shoot."

Jimmy sat in a chair, as if he could no
longer stand up. "Almost every night he
comes to me. No matter how sound I'm
sleeping, I feel a light touch on my arm and
when I open my eyes, he is there. And
then I haye to watch him fall, crumphing
down in a heap—." He hid his face in
his hands.

I thought then that it was only nerves, and that the arrest and the trouble had made my son see things. I comforted him all I could, and tried to talk about other things. But Jimmy could only think of one thing.

HE refused to eat anything, no matter how many times I fixed his favorite dishes. He told me that he had no appetite and his face, which had been colorless from the tragedy, became even more chalky-whif

For nearly a month I watched my swaste away. He took no interest in an thing. He avoided people, for he had idea that everyone was against him. As a walked the streets late at night, he thoug that people whispered "murderer" when passed. He cared nothing for his me and I don't believe he slept more than few minutes at a time.

The badge which he had never dishone and the revolver which he had used for first and last time were turned in to Customs. Jimmy would sit in a chair he at a time, trying to keep from falling asleep, Sometimes he read but once he came across something in an old school-book which made him stop reading. It was from Shake-

For in that sleep of death what dreams WAN COMP

Things kept getting worse and worse, was hoping and praying for the trial to be over, so that my poor boy could set his mind at rest. For I knew that there was no real case against him.

BUT one night, along in the last of Amoust I was awakened from a sound sleep by the most fearful screams from upstairs. I knew that they came from Jimmy's room, and as soon as I could put on a bathrobe and slippers, I ran upstairs. Jimmy's door was locked, and I pounded on it. But for a while there was no answer, although I could hear my son groaning and moaning Finally I heard a bureau being shoved aside. and the door opened. It was Jimmy, but so changed that I could hardly recognize him. even though he was my own son. His strong manly face was contorted with fear

"What is the matter, Jimmy dear?" I led

him over to the bed, for he was in a daze, Finally he told me. He had been sleeping more regularly for the last few nights and had been gaining a little strength for the ordeal in the court-room. But when he was quietly sleeping that night, with his windows tight shut and locked and his door barricaded, he felt a touch on his arm. e awakened, again he had seen the wraith Leo Boice. This time, though, was orse than all other times.

"Mother," he whispered, "I had to acf it over again. I had to kill him a second I felt the gun in my hand, and I t the trigger move, though there was no nd. And then Leo Boice fell, twisting a little crumpled heap. He fell . . . fell n the ceiling right on top of me!" His

se rose at the end like a whistle, and my seized my arm. Vill he come to me every night of my

Can't I ever get away from him? I d give anything if he hadn't been hit. do they give us guns for, if we're not poot? Guns are made to kill people That's what happens when guns are out. I didn't want to quarrel with Boice. I didn't care personally whether t he smuggled out his two pints of

"Mother of God, is he going to come back and haunt me every night of my life?" I sat in my son's room till after daybreak He did not sleen but lay with his head in

I have heard my mother tell stories of

wraiths in the old country. She herself had heard a hanshee once. And so it was not hard for me to believe what Timmy had seen, But why was it Jimmy that had to be haunted? For he was only doing his duty. It should have been the men who sent him

out to spy on his fellows, the men who nut a weapon of death into his hand and told him to go out and change human nature

After the terror of that night Immy grew worse. Again he had to re-enact the tragedy, watching Boice die for the third time There are those that say he was afraid of paying the price for what he had done But I know that night and day there was before him the face that he had seen. Leo Boice came back into this world to haunt the man who killed him, and I am as sure of that as I am of anything in this world.

Tuesday night Jimmy was very quiet in his room. I was glad to think that at last he was sleeping. But I did not know how

sound was that sleen.

In the morning there was the strong smell of eas through the house. I did not at first think of Jimmy's room, but finally I opened the door and thick clouds of gas nearly overpowered me. As it cleared, I rushed in

THE windows were shut and paper was stuffed into the cracks. On the bed, with a piece of rubber hose clenched between his teeth, lay my son Jimmy. He had given his life for the one he had taken. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is supposed to be a savage and forgotten law. Jimmy was judged and sentenced according to it.

Would a man rather die than serve a short jail-term? The worst that Jimmy could have received would have been a few years for homicide, and it was not this which

made him take his own life.

It was fear. Fear of public opinion, always prejudiced against authority. Fear of the thought that he had made a woman a widow. But, most of all, fear of the terrible phantom of Leo Boice which came nightly to his very bedside, awakening him and forcing him to go through the events of the tragedy all over again.

My son was forced to his death by the man he had shot and killed a month before!



The mystery of "the boy without a past" culminates in a night of panic—and murder—in a crowded theater!

WHEN Chatrond, the great magician, on a deserted road near Washington, D. C., he plunged into a web of mystery. The boy regained the normal use of his faculities but his memory was gone. All efforts to establish his identity failed. The only clue was a photograph of a beautiful girl which was found in his pocket. In an odd way the magician fell in love with that photograph.

Chatrand became a sort of godfather and big brother to the boy. By accident he discovered that Alexander, as he chose to call his protégé, possessed genuine mediumistic bowers, and this cemented the bond between

them.

After a successful season on the stage, the magician decided to visit Burope on a combined bistiness and pleasure trip. Alexander accompanied him. On the boat the two conducted experiments in clairvoyance and telepathy. It was Chatrand's great hope that the boy's subconscious mind would retain memories of his past life and that these could be brought to the surface by means of hypnotism.

On one occasion he questioned the hypnotized boy about the girl in the photograph. Alexander then gave the astounding information that she was the victim of a plot and was in terrible danger.

But he could tell no more. The strain was too great. Chatrand tenderly lifted him to his bed and discontinued the experiment.

A few moments later Chatrand was standing half-dressed in the bathroom, shaving, when he heard a noise in the next room. He looked in—and there, in the door, stood the girl who was the key to the whole uncanny musterv!

Before he could say a word, she made an embarrassed exclamation and withdrew. He dashed into the corridor—but found no trace of her! She had disappeared like a phantom!

HATRAND stood, bewildered and undecided, his lips drawn in a thinly compressed line and his eyes lowered in a deep, puzzled frown.

He had not been mistaken! Surely he had recognized the girl. Hadn't he lived, with the thought of her in his mind ever since he had taken Alexander as his own personal responsibility? Hadn't she repre-

sented the only possible clue that might lead to discovery of the boy's identity? Wasn't she the real secret reason for all these attempts at psychic contact? And didn't her photograph rest in his inner pocket daily, to be taken out and examined thoughtfully by him-each evening?

Nobody could trick him! He had seen that girl-the girl of his dreams-standing at the threshold of his stateroom. He had

heard her voice!

FOR a moment he had thought that she was a phantom; she had disappeared so quickly. But that was absurd. Of course she must be a passenger on the boat. But how could she possibly have escaped him? There was no stateroom opposite his; and he knew that the staterooms on either side were occupied by college boys off on a European intellectual spree.

In this wise, Chatrand's dazed mind was organizing its thoughts, as he stood in the center of the stairway salon-a ludicrous figure, only half dressed and his face covered with shaving lather. He was so absorbed in his problem that he completely

forgot his own condition.

Presently, as he stood poised against the roll of the ship, still gazing sharply from one end of the corridor to the other, he heard a voice that made his whole figure stiffen with excitement.

"Of course not! How ridiculous!" The same voice! The voice of the girl who had eluded him as astonishingly as if she had been a spirit with the power of making herself invisible.

He turned slowly, trying to decide whence the voice came. He caught the sound of an answer-in a low, sharp woman's tone-yet the words were so muffled and grumbling that he could not

distinguish them.

The sound came from his right. He took a few slow steps down the corridor in that direction and waited. Perhaps, if he listened intently for a moment, he would hear the girl's voice again.

But not a word broke the silence in the corridor, until the shrill, boisterous laughter of several passengers, evidently engaged in a private drinking party in one of the staterooms near-by, cut in on his reveries and drowned out any other sound that might have reached him.

A second later another distraction arrived in the person of the white-coated deck steward, who approached Chatrand with a glance that besnoke astonishment and distrust at his strange appearance.

For the first time Chatrand realized how he must look to anyone who discovered him standing there, plainly trying to eavesdrop! A moment's extreme embarrassment assailed him, but again his interest topped

any consciousness of self, "Look here!" He faced the steward earnestly. "I'm trying to find someone,

Maybe you can help me!"

He fumbled in his pocket for something to erase that look of unspeakable disapproval in the steward's glance. With an exclamation of annovance he realized he had not shifted the contents of his pockets when he had slipped on his dress trousers.

The steward's look, as he understood this, became almost ominous. After all, this man before him was a well-known magician, Though he might have conducted himself admirably during the entire voyage, here at last was proof that he was no ordinary common-sense, quiet-living individual.

"There's a girl who opened my cabin door by mistake," Chatrand continued hastily. "She realized her error immediately, begged my pardon and left. But I recognized her and came out to call her. She's disappeared."

The steward straightened his bent shoulders a fraction and cleared his throat ten-

tatively at this story.

"What's her name, sir?" he asked with dignity.

"I-I don't know," admitted Chatrand with chagrin, "I mean-I've forgotten, But look here-I'd like to trace her. She's in one of these staterooms right here. I just heard her voice."

The insistence of his appeal seemed to command a trace of respectful interest from

the steward.

"IDELL, sir," he decided slowly, "I think you're mistaken. I'm taking care of all these rooms here. There's the Texas crowd-they're all boys, you know. They have the six staterooms up to that room. Then there's a man and his wife and little girl three years old. Then, in there, is an old maid person, sir, who has a companion who's sick in bed all the time. An old invalid. Then there's a very rich man right here who travels alone, and then there's that actress and her husband. So you see that's everybody along this corridor. There ain't no young girl, and if there was I'd naturally know about it."

"I see," Chatrand nodded thoughtfully as he considered the list the steward had tolled

off for him.

"Maybe you'll see her at dinner this evening, sir," suggested the steward, with a possible touch of sarcasm in his voice. "Or, if you looked over the ship's list, you might recognize the name as you read it."

Another roar from the occupants of the near-by cabin interrupted Chatrand's reply, and at that moment the door swung open and an elderly lady, flushed and laughing, appeared.

C HATRAND nodded to the steward, and headed precipitately for his own state-room.

Alexander was still sleeping, and the magician went slowly back to his toilete as his mind concentrated on this puzzle. Strange, now that the steward had spoken of it, that he had not seen this girl in the dining salom—or anywhere on the boat during the entire voyage. He must look carefully tonight; her clear, charming features surely would stand out in any assembly. Perhaps she had been ill during the voyage, though she looked well enough when he had seen her just now. Surely she would be down to dimer tonight. Of course, there was no use looking over the list of passengers.

He resolved to say nothing of his strange experience to Alexander, and when the boy awoke he followed his original plan of giving a jovial party air to their final evening on the ship. The boy responded to the mood, but Chatrand could detect a heavy lethargy and a paleness that made him

anxious.

They entered upon the festivities with full enthusiasm. Chatrand even performed a few of his sleight-of-hand tricks to add to the entertainment. They toasted their shipboard friends with champagne; they went from table to table in the smoking room to exchange pleasantries; they took a final bet on the ship's mileage, and they attended the farewell dance with an air of enjoyment.

All the while Chatrand was searching for the face which haunted him. Not a trace of her during the entire evening. Half Jokingly he explained his predicament to the purser and described the girl in detail, but that good-natured official could think of no passenger answering the description.

Several times Chatrand slipped down to the spot where the steward had discovered him earlier in the evening. He walked back and forth, straining to hear again the cadence of that soft sweet voice. Later, when everyone was retiring, he haunted the spot.

But all to no purpose.

He longed to hold another scance with Alexander at once, for surely that near presence of their subject might lead to an even more definite contact in the boy's mind. But he did not dare to try the experiment. The boy was high-strung and nervous. The veins of his long, thin hands stood out sharply. His face was pale, and there were gray shadows under his large eyes. He seemed to be enjoying himself, and yet he tired early and was glad to seek his stateroom for sleep instead of staying up to sight land as they had planned at dinner.

No, Chatrand could not risk it. The boy's health was too important. He had suffered a severe shock that afternoon and still complained of a slight but persistent

pain across the top of his head.

Instead, Chatrand tried another ruse. He slept only a few hours that night, and five o'clock saw him up and dressed and on deek. He spent most of his time in walking back and forth between the corridor where he had heard her voice and the parallel deck which, he felt, was outside her window.

He was among the first down to breakfast and later he sat with Alexander while he breakfasted. They were the very first off at the landing, and the last (almost three hours later) to leave the dock. During all this time Chatrand scrutinized every soul that appeared on the ship—inth corridors, in the dining room, in the assembly when the inspector came on board, on the wharfs at the customs. And he watched each person coming down the gangplank.

Whatever the answer to the mystery, he saw no girl resembling the photograph in

his pocket.

AT length, in silence, he called a cah, attended to his luggage and drove to his chosen horel. Was it possible that he had imagined that precious image at his cabin threshold-the previous evening? Had he been so absorbed and affected by the scane that he had experienced a hallucination? But the voice! What of that? Might that be put down to a rationalization of his hallucination?

If so, it was a unique experience, Chatrand thought grimly. Never before had he had such a reaction, though he had heard of such things. Before he dismissed the incident, however, he determined upon one more search. He left Alexander at their hotel as soon as he had reserved a room, and he himself drove to the railroad station. There he sauntered about, observing whatever passengers from the ship were leaving immediately for other cities.

An hour devoted to this revealed nothing. From there he drove twenty miles out to the airport and made detailed inquiries as to who had flown that afternoon and who had booked passage for the evening or the following morning.

HE knew most of these passengers by name—they had been the wealthier and more hilarious groups on board. The girl of his search was not among them, he was certain.

He felt he ought to go back to Alexander and begin their planned holiday without further delay. Vet he could not bring himself to end this all-important search. He telephoned the hotel instead and left word for Alexander. Then he spent the rest of the afternoon in journeying from hotel to hotel, from the sight-seeing bus terminal to that mainstay of tourists, the huge claborate outdoor restaurant in the center of the thuy city of Gotenberg.

At length he gave up with a sigh and, conquering his dejection, returned to Alexander to carry out, with forced gaiety, their

plans for sight-seeing.

It was not long, however, before Chatrand realized that Alexander's gaiety was forced, too. For all his obvious effort to enjoy the sights that they had been looking forward to and talking about for weeks, the boy was devoid of any real spirit. He tired quickly and long before midnight they made their way back to the hotel to bed. The next morning they took an airplane to Copenhagen.

But here Alexander complained of a severe headache, which Chattand cured with his gentle massaging. Though no illness of any serious character developed, Alexander from that day onward was the victim of a nervous malady that required all of Chatrand's attention. The boy could not sleep, his appetite dwindled, his eyes burned with a feverish light and he became submerged in a strange lassitude.

All this was-particularly trying to Chatrand. His genuine affection for the boy was touched with something akin to motherly anxiety, and he upbraided himself for having overstrained Alexander's faculties. Their entire summer was a disappointment. True, Chatrand accomplished much in the direction of his own great interestmagic. He met and discussed certain points with several famous magicians who were giving performances in the cities to which they journeyed. He ferred out one or two experts in the line, worked for two solid weeks in Berlin on a new illusion, and ordered it to be built and shipped to America.

Except for these few accomplishments the true was an expensive failure. From acquaintances in England Chatrand learned that the spiritualists he wished to visit could not possibly be seen that season. One was seriously ill, another had been entangled in trouble with the authorities and the third was off traveling. Hence, Chatrand canceled his plan to visit England at all.

Over the magician himself there was creeping a singular depression, which he strove in vain to shake off. The continued illuess of his charge preyed on his mind and burdened him with a sense of responsibility. The thought of the one successful searce they had held, and the inexplicable apparation that had followed, lived with him day and night. Somehow, it had made the photograph even more vivid and actual. He burned to know whether it had been read or a hallucination; he longed to know if this girl who occupied so much of his thought were truly in difficulty and in need of help.

Then, too, his old cloak of Ionelineas shadowed him. Though he and Alexander met many people, particularly in Paris where through a sense of desperation Chat-rand threw himself into a round of gaiety amidst the café life, and though he was popular wherever he went, Chatrand felt more appallingly lonely in a crowd than alone in his hotel rooms with Alexander.

THEY went to Switzerland and spent a month in the mountains, resting, relaxing, goling and reading, Here, at last, Alexander regained some measure of health. And when, early in August, they sailed for America, both felt relieved and eager to face the new season.

Chatrand particularly felt the necessity of work. Work was the one fortress of safety; work was the one smoke screen that hid the actual world from his tired eyes; work was the one refuge and comfort that could enslave all his faculties and leave him too tired to consider himself.

Once in New York Chatrand took up the reins again with redoubled energy, though he truly felt weary after his vacation instead of renewed and rested. At once he began again the stories in the newspapers about Alexander. The boy's photograph was published, together with detailed stories of his accident. Chatrand even offered a tremendous reward to anyone who might give information leading to the discovery of the boy's identity.

Not one of the flood of answers was neglected. During that entire winter—in New York for ten weeks and then throughout the country—Chatrand never lessened his efforts to find the hov's kin.

A tutor was engaged to travel with Alex-

rand worry Alexander with any psychic experiments. Indeed, he almost refused to discuss the matter with the boy and bent his energies toward weaning his interest away from the subject

Alexander went frequently to the theater and mimicked Chatrand in every word and gesture. He learned every trick he could, delved into the secrets of the illusions, scoffed at the mind-reading assistant, declaring himself much more capable, and beyerd Chatrand to try, him in the art

One night—the last night in May, at the end of his season—Chatrand gave Alexander his cherished opportunity. In the same costume as the regular mind-reader, the how sat up on the stage, calm and up.

Did you see THE SPIDER on the stage? It was the sensation of New York a season ago.

Whether you saw it or not, you will want to read this amazing version of the story. The strange riddle of the spider locket and the murdered man will thrill you as it has already thrilled hundreds of thousands of plaugoers.

THE SPIDER is printed exclusively in GHOST STORIES. If you have not previously begun the story, don't fail to do so now!

ander, for the boy refused at the point of hysterics to stay in New York after Chatrand started on the road. In the meantime the great magician threw himself heart and soul into his work. He experimented and perfected his act, increasing the number of actors from four to eightnen people, working out-new illusions, new tricks, new decorations and costumes.

In his effort to escape from himself from the strange restlesenses that had seized him—he appeared for benefits, at private emetratainments; he associated with those in each city who sought his acquaintanceship; and finally he sought out anyone who was famed for particular spiritualistic powers, in a determined effort to form some contact between Alexander and that great unknown that was his kin.

Never once in that entire winter did Chat-

afraid, and without the slightest faltering read off the name of any article held for his psychic identification by Chatrand, who walked through the aisles and collected various objects from the audience.

This successful trial established again some measure of companionship between the two. Chatrand was delighted, and Alexander overjoyed. The boy had known the code, but the magician had given him many articles to identify for which there was no code—and Alexander had not hesitated. Chatrand had to admit that no assistant trained by his ordinary methods could match the performance his prodigity had given.

At length Chatrand decided that so long as they kept rigidly away from the dangerous subjects which interested them most, and devoted themselves to regular work, they could afford to return to their experiments in mind-reading and in trance sittings.

That summer, instead of going to Europe, they spent in the company of the tutor and a special guide and cook, in the wilds of Canada, camping, hunting, fishing and liv-ing the life of the open. Here in the solitude of the wilderness they began again their sittings. Their success was almost instantaneous, and in the two months they devoted to it Alexander developed an almost mechanical precision.

FOR this reason when they returned to New York in August to reorganize their act, Alexander was a full-fledged member of

Chatrand's company.

From the day in September when they gave their first performance, Chatrand experienced a sense of satisfaction that lifted him out of his strange, lingering sense of depression. They opened out of town, since Chatrand wished to give Alexander a full season of experience before they hit New York. The boy was an immediate successi Each place they played, Chatrand announced from the stage the unique history of his protégé. Alexander wore a mask throughout his mind-reading performance. At the end of the act the mask was removed and the great magician requested that if any persons in the audience recognized Alexander, they should come back stage after the performance to talk with him.

This strange story added a new interest to the already popular act of Chatrand the Papers carried the tale, running pictures of Alexander and Chatrand regularly. Many, many people filed to the backstage entrance at the end of each performance. Most of these, to the chagrin of both Chatrand and the boy, were prompted by mere curiosity. Occasionally there came an old woman whose eyes bore the hollow tale of a heartrending story, or a grave elderly man who told a tale of separation and search. Not once through the five months on the road was a real claim substantiated, Alexander felt this keenly. Each day he lived, he became more eager and anxious to know who he was and whence he had come. His face bore the mark of undaunted hope; his eyes were continually questioning-searching! Yet his spirit bore up well under the repeated disappointments and false alarms. He was happy in his work; he adored this new position that he held in life, at the side of the man he so admired and loved. And though the lad was

never strong and lusty, his health had improved gradually until he no longer suffered those relapses to which he had been a victim.

That season there developed a rare companionship between Chatrand and Alexander. The boy had been a strenuous care and responsibility to the great magician. Now he was normal physically and at peace with the world spiritually. His development and his success were a source of as much pride to Chatrand as if the boy were his own son. No father whose eldest-born grew up to follow his own footsteps and step into his own shoes, ever knew a greater or more boasting joy than Chatrand enjoyed in Alexander.

The intense interest of the boy in everything that pertained to Chatrand's work was the greatest bond between them. His absorption was as untiring as Chatrand's. For hours into the night they would work together, trying, experimenting, planning, drawing blue-prints of illusions and practicing various forms of sleight of hand, From the far corners of the world they obtained various rare books on magic for their library, together with precious autographs. costumes and apparatus of untold value to

Besides magic and conjuring they discussed and studied spiritualism, making pilgrimages to hidden authorities, following the work of the British Society for Psychical Research and occasionally performing experiments of their own that left them with a strange, inexplicable faith that defied materialistic theories.

In this wise, and in bolstering their act in preparation for New York, they spent their winter season.

JUST before Christmas they engaged a young Japanese as an assistant in their act. He was employed through an agent in New York and his services were procured at a ridiculously low salary simply with the idea of dressing up the act and making him useful as a "servant" throughout the performance.

His name, so he told them, was Banzai Animo Hati Tashi Hawa Torraki Bati Hatsumamma-but Chatrand dubbed him "Tommy" and let it go at that. His English was a source of high entertainment to them both, and somehow that young Jap never failed to put Chatrand into a fine good humor. Reticent, docile and quiet, Tommy developed an attachment for the magician

that was almost embarrassing. He shadowed Chatrand and Alexander wherever they went-with only a desire to be of service.

Within a month he had made himself almost indispensable. There was nothing that escaped him, nothing that did not require his quiet, silent attention even when that attention was not requested. The act was set up, the props were laid out in careful array, the illusions prepared. When all was taken care of, Tommy found it necessary to make the rounds by himself, test each rope and screw, count every article and satisfy himself that all was well!

The fifty-year-old company "manager" whose title covered the job of man of all work was driven nearly to desperation by the energetic little Jap. The baggage had already been counted-Tommy must needs recount it. The rabbits, the pigeons, the donkey and the horse that traveled with the act had been fed-but Tommy must feed them again and see that each was well taken care of. The music was packed, ready for distribution to the orchestra in the next theater-but Tommy would go over each page, find a slight tear and mend it with

grave dignity!

Just three weeks before they reached New York another addition was made to the act. Estelle Andrié, a dark, vivid French girl, with a figure as divine as her temper was sharp, was engaged for a new version of Chatrand's levitation trick. Estelle had been in America only a few months, coming to this country with a considerable reputation gained in her own Parisian theater; her experience, however, counted for little in the United States because of her labored English enunciation. She had decided to join Chatrand's act with a view to earning her way for a season while she perfected her speech. She felt herself far above the professional scale of those who played on the same bills, but she recognized in Chatrand her social superior.

FOR two solid weeks she spent all her energies in an attempt to infatuate Chatrand with her vital and youthful charms. Failing in this, almost to the point of being completely ignored, she adopted a protective and maternal attitude toward Alexanderwhich galled the boy. He, and not the master, had been dangerously attracted to this unique beauty, and he resented, her motherly air. She, on her side, was thoroughly amused at the embarrassed devotion of Alexander toward her and teased him cruelly in his most flirtatious moments. She learned his story and marveled at it,

taking the keenest interest each performance in the various people who might come back stage to see the boy and talk with him. It was Estelle's one desire to be present when the boy's people might recognize him. She lived in a breathless expectancy over this odd mystery, and was forever promising that tonight-tomorrownext performance-the great moment would occur.

DERHAPS it was Estelle's air of sensational interest in this subject that brought about a sudden and disquieting change in Alexander's mental state just before reaching New York. At any rate, surely the French girl's excitable absorption in the matter helped to unsettle Alexander.

He became, almost overnight, submerged in a wave of nervous anxiety. As the days grew closer to their New York opening, the boy became fretful, sleepless, expectant and half fearful. He seemed forewarned that something was impending-something that would change his whole life, and that might bring some dire disaster to him and to those he loved.

This new development Chatrand tried to overcome by devious means. At first he laughed at the boy, claiming that the thought of their big New York opening at the Tivoli Theater-the most famous vaudeville house in the world-had given Alexander

a fit of stage-fright,

But the youth was impatient at such a light treatment of his terrors. Only a few months previous Chatrand had told him the strange result of their séance on the boat to Europe. They had discussed the message frequently and dispassionately. If it was true, then, that the girl of the photograph came from New York-as had been revealed to Alexander during the trancewasn't it possible that she might appear before them one afternoon or evening after a performance? Mightn't she come to the theater and see him-or see his picture in the paper? Wasn't this, after all, their biggest opportunity to solve his life's mysterv?

In reply Chatrand pointed out that Alexander's picture had been published many, many times in the past two years in New York papers. The boy must not expect a miracle.

After all, in that same séance, Alexander had announced that the girl was in danger.

Perhaps she no longer lived. Perhaps she was many miles away. And even should she emerge from her puzzling silence of two years, during which time the entire country had been combed for clues and Alexander's story had been broadcast far and wide-what was there to fear? Alexander must prepare himself courageously for such a meeting and for all that it might He must master his nerves and control his hysteria, Otherwise Chatrand would forbid his appearance in New York.

This last threat, combined with the mental suggestion which the magician exerted over the lad, somewhat quieted Alexander, Though he became pale and his appetite forced, he managed to appear calm on the

surface, at least.

BUT something of his apprehension transmitted itself to Chatrand, who found, on the eve of his New York opening, that he himself was as nervous and unsettled as his beloved charge. His opening each season in New York meant a great deal to him, and he faced this particular first performance with a taut tension that harried him unbearably.

Monday afternoon, and Monday night, came and went without any unusual occurrence, much to the relief of Chatrand. The strained horror of those moments having been put behind him, the magician again felt himself master of any situation that might arise. He regretted the continued apprehension of Alexander and upbraided himself for ever having permitted the boy to become so important to his act. After all. the boy was not normal and should never have been allowed to become a regular performer. Since it was too late to rectify the mistake, however, Chatrand gritted his teeth and determined to see the strenuous and all-important next six weeks through, even if it took every vestige of his strength to control the boy. Whatever the cost or whatever the means he might have to adopt, it was vital that their season end in triumphant success in New York.

As each performance ended, Alexander's strange premonition strengthened until it fast grew into a passion with the boy. The more the lad suffered, the more determined and coolly prepared Chatrand became. His own spirit was untouched now, but he watched the boy as he would watch a sick bird, trying to use his own psychic powers to probe the true significance of such a

turmoil.

Perhaps the boy was really forewarned! Perhaps something might truly happen to warrant this hysteria. If so, Chatrand was prepared to meet it, and every moment he was acutely on the lookout for its appearance.

The week was becoming a severe strain on him, for with each performance he found himself exerting more and more pressure upon Alexander. Their performances were becoming truly phenomenal, though the audience had little conception of the strange wonders that were being performed for their entertainment. Less and less, with each performance, was their mind-reading act a matter of routine or code, and more and more it became a matter of Chatrand's absolute domination and mastery over the mind of the boy blindfolded on the stage.

Thursday evening the blow fell! At that performance there occurred the justification of Alexander's premonition, and a testing of Chatrand's powers which he himself had

never dreamed of!

It was raining that night and he and Alexander were at the theater earlier than usual. Chatrand, in his customary fashion that week, attempted to cajole and banter with the boy while they prepared their set and their acts. Even while they made up. (using the same dressing-room, because of all that was on their minds) Chatrand joked and teased as the hour approached for their own turn.

He teased the boy about Estelle, the French girl, giving him advice as to the best way to win her consideration. He discussed the appalling multiplicity of the rabbits, insisting that he knew no more names to christen the last and newest additions to the family. He held a mock conversation with the three goldfish as he prepared his goldfish table, calling them Hoover, Smith and Cal and trying to decide which had the biggest fins.

THE music came faintly to their dressingroom while the news reels were being shown out on the stage. They heard the call for Mack and LaRue, the skating act, and the whirlwind music for their amazing acrobatic tricks. Chatrand chatted spiritedly on, eagerly noting each answer Alexander made and heaving a grateful sigh when at last he made the boy laugh. Then came the call for Lytell and Fant, the comic black-face act that always earned an encore. Other acts were called and their make-orbreak period passed, and finally Chatrand walked up into the wings, arm in arm with Alexander.

He was a handsome man, this worldfamous magician, as he stood before the beautiful black velvet curtains on which his initials gleamed with shimmering spangles. Faultlessly groomed in full dress, his cane on his arm, his silk hat at an aristocratic angle, and his long black cape lined with white satin thrown back over one shoulder. Chatrand cut a romantic and impressive figure. He bowed gravely to the greeting of applause he received, and began his routine with his usual suave and bland manner.

FROM the wings Alexander watched, his heart filled with profound admiration. Behind him, though he knew it not in spite of the fact that her warm breath was on his neck, stood Estelle in the shadows. She, too, was watching, lipe parted, eyes shin-

ing with deepest admiration.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" began Chatrand in his friendliest and most cajoling tones. "With your kind attention I shall try to entertain and amuse you with a few feats in magic, conjuring and mind-reading. Before commencing my entertainment, however, I want it to be distinctly understood that I shall do my very best to deceive you!"

These words, as her cue, brought Estelle to life sharply. With a gentle push she passed by Alexander and made her entrance. She was conscious of the charming figure she cut in her black net tights and her black satin page-boy costume trimmed with brillants. She accepted Chatrand's hat and put out her hand to take his cane, which he made disappear into thin air. She then left the stage, only to return a moment later with a lighted cigarette which she handed to the magician, who wrapped it up in a handkerchief and caused it to disappear like the cane before it.

At this point the black velvet curtains were drawn, revealing the startling and colorful full-stage set of Chatrand's act. To the left of an elaborate illusion box in the center of the stage, stood Tommy in his

Japanese costume.

Estelle helped Chatrand off with his cape, which he swung about, keeping up his beguiling talk to the audience all the while. From the empty cloak, after turning it wrong side out, he produced a bouquet of flowers. Then, whipping it open and empty again, he produced several doyes which flew out over the audience to return and perch peacefully on the stage. Then from the

mysterious folds of the cloak came the bowl of goldfish—Hoover, Smith and Cal! swimming around contentedly to the applause of the Tiyoli Theater.

Advancing toward the footlights, Chatrand spoke gravely above the soft accom-

paniment of his favorite waltz.

"My next experiment, ladies and gentlemen, I brought home with me from India. This cabinet was presented to me by an old Hindu priest in the white silences of the Himalayas."

As he spoke, Estelle and Tommy turned the illusion cabinet in the center of the stage completely around, showing all sides, and then Chatrand entered the box himself, speaking all the while.

"That strange old priest used to get into the cabinet like this, showing that it was empty. Nothing here, nothing there, walls

solid, and the top lifts up."

Then, taking a long black stick which Estelle handed him, Chartand moved it under the cabinet, explaining that there were no mirrors to deceive the audience. He drew a magnificent spangled curtain across the front entrance of the cabinet and, taking a revolver from Estelle, announced with a magnificent flair:

"Watch me closely, please, for the closer you watch the less you see. In two seconds, mind you, I will show you a sight which has caused the most profound astonishment in

the principal cities of the world!"

With these words, Chatrand fired the revolver at the closed curtain, which was immediately whisked open, and there in the depths of the cabinet appeared Alexander, standing rigidly erect almost as if he were in a cataleptic condition. He was costumed in green satin trousers, with a scarlet sash girdling the loose white silk blouse open at the throat. Over his eyes he wore a scarlet mask.

"LADIES and gentlemen," announced Chatrand, "my assistant, Alexander, the famous mind-reader!"

With a profound and grave dignity, Chatrand took Alexander's extended arm and guided him to a chair which Tommy had placed by the footlights. Then with a slight gesture Chatrand stopped the music.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began quietly, "before commencing my mind-reading demonstration, I want to tell you å few things-about my assistant. I found this young man two years ago in Washington He had evidently been wounded in some sort of accident. It developed that he had lost his memory completely. Nobody knew who he was. The authorities were ready to send him to an institution, so I took him with me and he has become the best mindreading assistant I have ever had

"I keep him masked because I am afraid that some evening my performance will be interrupted my someone in the audience who recognizes this lost boy—perhaps his mother, his father or his sweetheart. But I promise you, before I leave the stage tonight, I will remove that mask, for I am the last person in the world to keep this boy from his family.

"If anyone in the audience can help identify this young man, I shall be much obliged if you will come to the stage door at the end of the performance."

Then, taking a gray silk handkerchief from the back of the chair, Chatrand tightly bandaged Alexander's eyes, while the music played again and he continued with his regular speech.

"I shall now blindfold Alexander so that he cannot see. I will now pass among you. Give me anything you like and Alexander will tell you its name and its history."

Swiftly Chatrand crossed to the platform that led into the audience. As the lights of the theater flared up, he paused, and added something which he had felt impelled to say only since they had opened in New York.

"I have but one request to make, ladies and gentlemen," he urged earnestly. 'Please remain absolutely quiet during this demonstration. Alexander is in a parely hypnotized condition and any unusual noise, any unexpected sound, would be fraught with serious consequences to him. I thank you!"

With this warning, Chatrand left the stage and walked down into the aisle.

"Anything at all, please!" suggested Chatrand to the wide-eyed patrons who looked up at him from their seats. "Ah, thank you. Alexander, what is this I hold in my hand?"

From the stage came the strained, hollow tones of the boy who already was under the complete control of the suave magician. "It is a watch!"

"Describe the watch!"

are J. B."

"It is a gold watch..." Alexander measured his tones as if endeavoring to make perfect contact with his master's thought waves. "It has a hunting case.... There are initials on it.... The initials "Correct!" Chatrand's voice was triumphant as he appreciated the smooth connection between himself and the boy on the stage. "Now, can you give me the number on this watch?"

"The number of the watch is-" droned Alexander obediently-"764531944."

That was difficult, and Chatrand was pleased with the accuracy which Alexander displayed. He obtained verification of this amazing demonstration from several gentlemen on the sistle—and then, turning, he spied a stout, motherly-looking woman on the opposite side of the theater holding up her hand and waving a paper anxiously in the air.

"Alexander!" called Chatrand sharply.
"The lady is holding up an object in her hand. What is it? Come now!"

"It is a letter," decided Alexander hesitantly.

"Describe the letter!" commanded Chatrand, somewhat reckless in this chance at

rand, somewhat reckless in this chance at distance reading. "It is a love-letter," struggled Alexander.

"It is a souvenir of a romance."

Chatrand beamed his triumph as the lady across the theater seemed confused and

embarrassed.

"Shall Alexander describe the romance, madam?" he teased in high good humor at the success of the experiment.

But the ruddy lady indignantly shook her head in the negative, to the amusement of the audience.

Down the aisle Chatrand passed, going from one to another in a quick succession of readings. The name on an automobile license, the registration in a golf club; a fraternity pin from which Alexander read the Greek letters and the inscription on the back.

Then Chatrand reached the fifth row center, and suddenly his eyes met a picture that so startled him that for a moment he could not find his voice!

SEATED on the aisle was an elderly man, red-faced and gray-haired. He was dressed in a tuxedo and carried himself with an air of proprietorship that seemed to include the charming person at his side.

It was this person that caused Chatrand to catch his breath and bite his lower lip with shocked surprise.

The girl of the photograph! The girl he had seen for one fleeting second on the boat almost two years ago! The girl who was the one link of possible identification of

Alexander! He almost lost control of himself.

There she sat by the side of the elderly gentleman, more beautiful than her picture had ever promised. About her was an air of wistful sadness. She was soft and gentle, and evidently somewhat timid of the arrogant man who was her escort.

All this Chatrand observed with that first sweeping glance of recognition. All thisand something more! Something that caused his heart to continue pounding even as he recaptured his poise within a second

after seeing her!

About her white young throat was a gold chain-and hanging from this chain was the same unique locket which she wore in the picture that was now resting in the inside pocket of Chatrand's dress suit over his

thundering heart!

The same locket which he had marked so often! Here, surely, was the girl of the picture! He must not let her get away this time! Here was the cause of all Alexander's nervous apprehension of the past week! It had not been fancy or fear or whimsy that had made the boy suffer so! He was truly psychic, then, and knew of this meeting, in his inner soul!

In one fleeting second, all this passed through Chatrand's mind as he stood star-

ing at the girl.

Then, impulsively, he approached her, looking straight into the soft, inquiring eves he knew so well from the picture. He hardly recognized his own voice when he spoke, so strained it was from his desperate effort for self-control.

"DO you wish to give me something, miss?" he asked.

One second the girl paused, as if frightened. Then a determined look flashed into her eyes and a white hand went up to her

"Yes-I do!" she said clearly-bravely-

defiantly.

The man beside her turned toward her indignantly. But with one swift gesture the girl removed the locket and chain from her neck and started to hand it to Chatrand who was standing directly beside her escort.

"I don't want you to do that," the man hissed sharply. "Why not?" The girl's voice was edged

with nerves, though she succeeded in appearing offhand. "It will be fun!" "Put it back on your neck. Do as I say!"

commanded her escort in a tone of au-

thority that Chatrand could have struck him

"Please, John," pleaded the girl softly. "You're making us conspicuous

"Well, don't do it, then!" snapped the man. Then he turned a livid, angry face toward Chatrand. "Go away! Try the others! I'm not in the mood for this non-Sense."

EVEN if the moment were not fraught with such serious importance to him, Chatrand would have defied that arrogance.

"But the young lady is interested in my act!" Chatrand smiled stiffly, his voice almost oily with unction. "Why not let me have it?"

He gazed at the girl as he spoke, endeavoring to give her a message with his eyes. Almost as if she understood him, she impulsively thrust the locket across her escort into Chatrand's hand.

"Here!" she said anxiously, her eyes big

with fright.

"I'll take that!" cried the man beside her quickly.

But Chatrand was too quick for him, He had the locket in his hands.

"Won't you please return that locket?"

spluttered the elderly man, rising from his seat. "The young lady has requested me to read

this for her," retorted Chatrand with an air of finality. "I will return it after the demonstration. Alexander!"

At the sound of his name the blindfolded boy on the stage started and shivered, Glancing at him, Chatrand noticed that his fingers were twitching nervously. He wondered how much of this incident the law had received cognizance of, and just how it might have affected him. Now was no time to chance any break in the boy's contact. He must work quickly and surely, and retain his control over the boy absolutely.

But even as he thought this, the elderly man was speaking with heated determination.

"I am this young lady's guardian," he announced in tones loud enough to be heard throughout the theater, so far had he forgotten himself. "She has disobeyed me. I demand that locket back at once. Do you understand?"

The audience was becoming excited. Even in the turmoil of his own excitement Chatrand could see that. They were turning, craning in their seats, to see the cause of this disturbance.

"You are interrupting this performance, sir!" Chatrand spoke sharply. "Alexander! What is this I hold in my hand? Alexander! Answer me!"

MMEDIATELY the boy answered, -His voice was pitched in high, nervous tones and his words were clipped as if his teeth were bitting off each syllable.

"It is a medallion. It . . . contains . . . , a locket!"

"Describe the locket!" commanded Chat-

"It . . . is . . . a gold spider locket," called out Alexander in answer,

Chatrand could see that the boy was suffering. The thought flashed through his mind that perhaps under the strain of this contact the boy's memory might return. . . .

"See here, sir-" began the irate old gentleman again.

But Chatrand spoke through him, lifting his hand to command silence.

"Alexander!" he cried again, bringing all his hypnotic powers to bear in the four syllables.

The boy half rose to his feet, his hands grasping the back of the chair for support. He began to sway back and forth as if he were sensible of a gathering storm and clash. His voice, when he spoke, was shrill and piercing.

"It . . . is . . . an . . . ob-ject with a cu-rious history!"

At this the girl leaned forward breathlessly, her eyes wide with expectancy. Her

escort lost all control of himself. He leaped to his feet and stalked out into the aisle after Chatrand. "I want this stopped at once!" he shouted,

"You have no right! I didn't come here for this sort of thing. For the last time, I tell you-"

By this time he had followed Chatrand down the aisle and half-way up the steps leading onto the stage, and had grasped the magician's arm with a grip of iron.

"Let go my arm, sir," snarled Chatrand.

elderly man shot! "Haven't you got any more sense?" "John!" called the girl from her seat, pierced through the theater.

her face and throat flushed with excitement. "John, please! Come and sit down, please!" But the man was not to be controlled.

"You're not going to get away with this sort of thing!" he stormed. "If you don't return that locket at once, I'll have you arrested. I'll call the police!"

"Alexander!" called Chatrand perately, as he tried to hold off the man and raise the locket high above his head for the boy's attention, "What is inside this locket?"

"Inside the locket-is-" began Alexander in his hollow, strained incantation as he still half leaned against the back of his chair for support.

But the boy got no further.

At the very moment that he was about to reveal the most important thing of all, every light in the theater went out and the entire house, stage and audience, was thrown into utter blackness!

C HATRAND heard the girl cry out in terror. He heard, too, Alexander's straight-back chair tipping over in the darkness and landing with a crash on the stage. A second later he was seized by the man who had been arguing with him.

Chatrand felt impelled to protect the locket above all else. He groaned with the strain of a twisted arm as his opponent seized his wrist with vicious strength-and a second later, in spite of his efforts, the locket was ripped from his grasp,

The next thing he heard was a shot! The smell of gunpowder under his own nose! The weight of his assailant falling in a heavy lunge against him and down the

stairway! "Lights!" cried Chatrand quickly. "House lights! Turn on the lights, quick!"

A moment after his command the theater was again flooded with light.

Chatrand blinked a moment with the daze of the sudden light. Then he saw! At his feet, twitching in a crumpled heap, lay the

A second later a heartrending scream

Fate has dealt a terrible blow to Chatrand-for the stranger is fatally injured. Who fired the shot? In the eyes of the police, suspicion will point inevitably to Chatrand or to Alexander or to the girl-the girl whom Chatrand has worshipped ever since he first saw her photograph! How can the magician save himself and those he loves? What is the connection between the boy's mysterious past and the murdered man? Strange events follow each other with lightning rapidity and will hold you breathless! Follow this great story in the March GHOST STORIESon the news stands February 23rd,

MARK TWAIN'S Astounding Vision

Once in his life did the great humorist come face to face with the terrifying forces of the Other World

ARK TWAIN, the humorist, is the last person that one would suspect of being psychic, and yet he had at least one strange and terrifying experience that cannot be explained in a material way. The facts are given by Albert Bigelow Paine, his biographer.

At the time of his uncanny experience, Mark Twain (his real name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens) was a young man in his twenties and he was working on the Pennsylvania, a Mississippi steamboat. He was on the verge of realizing his childhood ambition of being a pilot but his success as an author was a long way ahead. His brother, Henry, a handsome, attractive boy of twenty, was third clerk on the same boat and Mark Twain was inordinately proud and fond of him.

The boys spent a great deal of time in the company of George Ealer, one of the pilots, and Mark quoted Shakespeare and Goldsmith and played the flute to his heart's content. These were great days-in spite of Brown, the other pilot, who had taken a violent dislike to Mark-and the young steersman could never have guessed that the shadow of a long sorrow was even then stretching across the path ahead.

Yet in due time he received a warning, a remarkable and impressive warning, though of a kind seldom heeded.

The full story is told as follows by Mr.

"One night when the Pennsylvania lay in St. Louis, he slept at his sister's house and had this vivid dream:

"He saw Henry, a corpse, lying in a metallic burial case in the sitting room, supported on two chairs. On his breast lay a bouguet of flowers, white, with a single crimson bloom in the center.

"When he awoke, it was morning, but the dream was so vivid that he believed it real. . . . He rose and dressed, thinking he would go and look at his dead brother. Instead he went out on the street in the early morning and had walked to the middle of the block before it suddenly flashed upon him that it was only a dream. He bounded back, rushed to the sitting room and felt a great trembling revulsion of joy when he found it really empty. He told Pamela (his sister) the dream, then put it out of his mind as quickly as he could. . . .

"BROWN swore that he would leave the boat at New Orleans if Sam Clemens (Mark Twain) remained on it, and Captain Klinefelter told Brown to go. Then, when another pilot could not be obtained to fill his place, the Captain offered to let Clemens himself run the daylight watches, thus showing his confidence in the knowledge of the young steersman who had been only a little more than a year at the wheel. But Clemens himself had less confidence and advised the Captain to keep Brown back to St. Louis. He would follow up the river by another boat and resume his place as steersman when Brown was gone.

"Without knowing it, he may have saved

his life by the decision.

"It is doubtful if he remembered his recent disturbing dream, though some foreboding would seem to have clung over him the night before the Pennsylvania sailed, Henry liked to join in the night watches on the levee when he had finished his duties, and the brothers often walked around, chatting together. On this particular night the elder spoke of disaster on the river. "Finally he said:

"'In case of accident, whatever you do, don't lose your head-the passengers will do that. Rush for the hurricane deck and to the life-boat, and obey the mate's orders. When the boat is launched, help the women and children into it. Don't get in yourself. The river is only a mile wide. You can swim ashore easily enough."

"It was good manly advice, but it vielded a long harvest of sorrow.

"Captain Klinefelter obtained his steersman a pass on the A. T. Lacey, which left two days behind the Pennsylvania. This was pleasant, for Bart Brown (a friend of Sam Clemens) had become captain of that The Lacey touched at Greenville. Mississippi, and a voice from the landing shouted:

"The Pennsylvania is blown up just below Memphis, at Ship Island! One hun-

dred and fifty lives lost!'

"Nothing further could be learned there. but that evening at Napoleon a Memphis extra reported some of the particulars. Henry Clemens' name was mentioned as one of those who had escaped injury. Still farther up the river they got a later extra. Henry was again mentioned: this time as being scalded beyond recovery.

"By the time they reached Memphis, they knew most of the details: at six o'clock that warm mid-June morning, while loading wood from a large flat-boat sixty miles below Memphis, four out of eight of the Pennsylvania's boilers had suddenly exploded with fearful results. All the forward end of the boat had been blown out. Many persons had been killed outright; many more had been scalded and crippled and would die. It was one of those hopeless, wholesale steamboat slaughters which for more than a generation had made the Mississippi a river of death and tears.

"Sam Clemens saw the boy taken to the dead room; then the long strain of grief, the days and nights without sleep, the ghastly realization of the end, overcame him. A citizen of Memphis took him away in a kind of daze and gave him a bed in his house, where he fell into a stupor of

fatigue and surrender.

"It was many hours before he woke; when he did, at last, he dressed and went to where Henry lay. The coffins provided for the dead were of unpainted wood, but the youth and the striking face of Henry Clemens had aroused a special interest. The ladies of Memphis had made up a fund of sixty dollars and bought for him a metallic

"Samuel Clemens, entering, saw his brother lying exactly as he had seen him in his dream, lacking only the bouquet of white flowers with its crimson center-a detail made complete while he stood there, for at that moment an elderly lady came in with a large white bouquet and in the center of it was a single red rose."

March GHOST STORIES—

a sensational collection of uncanny, spooky, creepy tales!

Among its features you will find:

The Mark on the Seaman's Throat:

The ship was worse than haunted! Some awful Thing attacked the sailors in their bunks at night! One dying seaman talked deliriously of a satisfies in the benefits at figure. One dying season the decidence of the strange and beautiful woman whose touch was death—but the Captain did not dream of the fantastic truth until that night when he stood face to face with the Thing! Here is a story to thrill you to the finger tips!

Dancers in the Locked House:

Once each year, misty figures moved in stately dances inside the deserted mansion. Only to see them put a curse upon you! But Florabel had a massion. Only to see them has a curse upon your. But Foreace had a woman's curiosity—she looked too long at the dancers. Suddenly she thought she saw the figure of a lost friend! With a cry she sprang forward! What would happen when she reached that accursed house? Could a mortal join in those unearthly revels? You won't forget this story!

Magic Cymbals:

Professor Sisti, famous orchestra conductor, discharged the musician who played the cymbals-and the man committed suicide. Thereafter, night and day, Sisti heard the awful crashing of phantom cymbals. The uncanny noise shattered his nerves-wrecked his career! But that was not the worst! When ghostly hands clutched at his beloved wife; then-

These and a dozen other thrilling, unusual stories make the March GHOST STORIES one of the best numbers we have ever printed! You can't

afford to miss it! On all news stands February 23rd.

Burning Eyes

This boy was a guttersnipe and a born thiefbut he couldn't cheat a ghost! Here is the strangest confession ever made by an ex-criminal

Bu TOM MARTIN

As told to TERRELL McKAU

WAS born in the slums of a great city. I grew up on the streets. The return of a drunken father was nothing to me; beatings from him were a daily thing. Every single item of environment that the average gunman and thief has, I had. Only one thing was different. I did like to go to school, mainly because it kept me from working and gave me access to a library. So, when my father would attempt to put me to work, I would ask help from the truant officers in order to stay in schooland my dear parent was forced to stand by and fume, while I loafed through school until I reached the age of sixteen. I was

a wonder in mathematics. When I was sixteen, my dear father gleefully informed me that I could have my choice of going to work and having him collect my wages or of leaving home. I chose to leave, and after closing one of my eyes and otherwise disfiguring me as a final token of his paternal love, he threw me bodily into the street.

I spent the night in the back room of a saloon where I was known, and managed to steal enough from the pockets of a drunken

Jackson glared down at me. I'll come back from hell. if need be, to make a man man to eat for a few days. For several months I lived in this fashion, from hand to mouth, stealing from wagons and buggies, acting as lookout man for gangs of thieves-doing anything for the money with which to live and buy clothes.

Finally there came a day when I was



hauled before the precinct Captain of Police and lectured. He told me that they knew how I was living; that they knew I was a thief, as was my father before me; and that unless I had a job before the sun went down, I would be arrested as a vagrant and given two hundred days in the workhouse.

AND so I became a trucker for a wholesale grocery firm, trucking goods from the stacks inside to the loading platformand there I met Alfred Jackson. I would have fled from this man in terror if I had dreamed of the weird series of events that

was to link my fate with his.

Jackson was the shipping clerk and was my immediate superior. Before I had been employed three days, he caught me stealing cigarettes. I was attempting to smuggle them outside under my coat. He took me before the cashier and attempted to have me discharged. But I had not passed my high-school courses in English for nothing. Seeing a possible term in the workhouse before me, I pleaded my case with impassioned eloquence - and the kind-hearted cashier not only permitted me to hold my job but also advanced me two dollars for my meals until pay-day! Little did he know that I had already "knocked down" five dollars that day by slipping out tobacco and cigars under my coat and selling them to my old friend at the saloon.

I worked there for several months, doing as little actual work as possible, always under the eagle eye of Jackson. Twice again he caught me stealing, and each time I pleaded harder and harder to hold my place. And all the while I was earning money

dishonestly. Or could one call stolen money "earned"?

Jackson's god was honesty, and he expected all men to worship with him, And the fact that the cashier knew I was stealing, and yet did not discharge me, only added to Jackson's hatred and dislike of me. The cashier was a church-going man who, unlike so many in this day and time, believed in carrying religion into everyday life. But at that time I did not appreciate his help and only put him down as an "easy mark."

Things reached a point between Jackson and me where I felt that I could no longer stay on the job. But I was held there by the fear of the police. Wise old Captain O'Keefe! Whether he was impelled by a sense of duty to the commonwealth, or by a desire to see me prosper in the world, I never knew; but once a week, if not oftener,

he would stop and see me, and remind me that the workhouse was waiting for me when

Jackson would call me into his office

I stopped working.

when the work was slack, and while the other truckmen were allowed to rest until they were needed, I was compelled to listen to long lectures on the value of honesty and on my base ingratitude to him, the company, Captain O'Keefe and the world in general.

Finally I discovered another source of income, less hazardous than the original one. We truckers were required to truck the cases, boxes and sacks of groceries to the platform from which the delivery wagons were loaded. Jackson and his assistant would take the delivery slips for each wagon in turn and call for the necessary articles. As each item was checked off, we truckers would load the goods in the wagon.

I had been there thirteen months-thirteen months of hell!-when one of the delivery men approached me one day and asked me to hide two extra sacks of sugar on his wagon. Of course, I fell in with the plan immediately, and thereafter I turned a nice profit each day from articles I threw on different wagons when the shipping clerk or checker had his back turned. The drivers would sell the different articles and split the

money with me on their return.

Jackson's attitude toward me was growing more and more overbearing. His talks grew increasingly disquieting to me; he dropped vague hints as to what he knew of me and my actions, and of his desire to make a man of me or kill me. His eyes exercised a powerful effect upon me. When he talked to me, I could not help but look him straight in the eye, try as I wouldand if I turned my gaze away from his, I could feel his flaming eyes burning into my face.

THERE came a day when I threw caution to the winds, and in the midst of one of his fiery speeches took off my trucking apron and told him I was through. Slipping off his high stool, he struck me fair between the eyes, and in a few minutes he had given me such a lacing as a man seldom receives.

"You little guttersnipe!" he said. "You'd like to see me dead!" Jackson glared down at me. "Well, I'll come back from hell, if need be, to make a man of you!"

There was to be a day when I would remember those few words. But at that time all my attention was turned on my swollen, lacerated face and fast-closing eyes, For another twelve months this went on. And all the time Tackson's eves were alreason. And a man making five or six dol-

ways foremost in my mind. With the money I was stealing, I could have anything within lars a day dishonestly, does not hesitate to spend it. My days were devoted to work and to scheming new ways for thefts; my nights to dissipation. But I was positively miserable when I was near Jackson, and he did his best to keep me that way. Yet I could not quit. I had enough money to quit and leave town, yet all the while I knew I could not do it.

track and we got to unload it at once, or the firm pays demurrage,"

As I returned to the shipping office, I overheard Mr. Newton say to Jackson, "-and I had to bring it myself. There's over six thousand dollars here-the payroll's extra heavy on account of the new men we put on to handle the sugar. I want you to help me place it in envelopes."

PEEPING around the door, I saw the familiar black bag which I knew contained the monthly payroll for the company's men. As I finished telling Jackson the count of sugar in the particular stack in which he

"By the time we were ready to load the outgoing delivery wagons, I had determined to continue my sustematic thefts. Waiting until the clerk's back was turned. I threw an extra sack of sugar on the wagon.

"Then the terrible thing happened. Oh, God, did I see the burning eyes of Jackson peering at me through a mist? Did I feel the cold touch of his invisible hand?"

And when I was eighteen and one-half years of age, I came to the turning-point of my career. While I had not paid much attention to it, the sugar market had dropped. The canny business men by whom I was employed took advantage of the decline to purchase carload after carload of sugar, knowing full well that the price would rise later. We of the trucking gang swore lustily at the additional work, and stacked the sacks of sugar all day long in high piles, until the very concrete floors seemed to groan.

ONE day, as the cashier, Mr. Newton, stood in the shipping office talking to Jackson, Jackson called me to bring to him the count on the number of sacks in a certain stack of sugar. I left, counted the stack and, noticing that it was bulging over at the top, mentioned the fact to the foreman of the trucking gang.

"Mention it to Mr. Jackson when you go back, kid," he said. "And hurry back. There's two more cars of the stuff on the was interested-and of the leaning of the stack-the foreman of the trucking gang rushed to the door and said: "Mr. Jackson, that stack of sugar in Section Eight is leaning bad; if it topples, it'll crash into the elevator shaft and there'll be the devil to

Jackson and Newton dashed out of the door with the foreman, leaving me without a word. My eyes fell on the black bag. My mind functioned smoothly, accurately and swiftly. Six thousand dollars. More than six thousand dollars! How many suits of clothes, rides, bottles of beer, would that buy? What a time a man might have on six thousand dollars! Did I have the nerve to seize it, walk slowly through the door and lose myself in the maze of railroad tracks and freight cars surrounding the building? True enough, I had been stealing for over two years, and my nerves were strong, yet I had education enough to realize that my thefts in the past had been confined to articles of such value as to render my crimes (in the eyes of the law) a misdemeanor, punishable by a term in the workhouse. The theft of six thousand dol-

With a strong effort of will I discarded

lars would be a felony, punishable by years of imprisonment.

my trucking apron and stretched forth my hand to seize the black bag.

As I did so, there came the sound of a startled cry, a few dull thuds, a sickening crunch and a dull roar, to be followed by the scream of a man in agony. Then silence, and the confused murmur of voices and the sound of running feet.

Somewhere a man's voice cried, "My God, Mr. Newton and Mr. Jackson are caught!"

That was the deciding factor. I seized the bag and started for the door. As I did so, a hand gripped mine and I hesitated in terror, glancing rapidly about for the one who had stopped me. I saw no one-but the grasp on my hand did not cease.

In terror, I dashed through the door, still clutching the bag, and raced wildly to the locker room where I placed it in my locker, Only when I relinquished my hold of the bag, did the pressure on my wrist relax.

Arriving on the first floor, I saw a sight which almost unnerved me. Jackson and Newton, walking under the tall pile of sugar, had come under it just as it toppled. Newton had managed to run clear of the fall of the pile, save for his legs, which were hit and broken by several of the hundred-pound bags. He was unconscious from the shock. Jackson was not so fortunate.

His head was an awful sight. Several sacks had struck his body and one sack had hit him full on the back of the neck.

Cruel as it may seem, my heart gave a bound when I viewed his mangled body on the floor. No more, I thought, would he lecture me. Little did I know that I was to undergo experiences which would make his lectures seem a pleasant dream. I was certain now that I could steal the little black bag and its contents and escape.

OH, but I was wise! I lurched against the foreman, as they carried Jackson's body away, and gasped as if deathly sick. The grizzled foreman, a veteran of two

wars, threw a kindly arm about me. "Best change clothes, bub, and go home," he said; "tisn't every day a kid sees such a

I muttered a few words and dashed down the stairs to the locker room. What did I care if they carried Jackson's body away on a stretcher-or Newton's for that matter? I changed clothes rapidly, shaking nervously. I reached for the bag, meaning to sneak out the back entrance, never to return. But the moment I touched the bag, I felt my hands seized by a force which I knew only too well, and it seemed to me that I could discern the terrible eyes of Jackson peering at me through a mist. My mind struggled against the impression and I tried to start for the rear door, intending to leave at once.

BUT a force greater than my strength prevented me. Slowly but surely the form of Jackson materialized in the air before me, and I was forced to acknowledge that I was in the grasp of a man more powerful than myself. But, worst of all, before my face there burned the fiery eyes of the man I hated more than anyone else in the world. Alfred Jackson, who I knew was dead!

I was forced to a sitting position on the dressing-room bench and the bag was wrenched from my grasp. Upstairs, there came the clangor of the departing ambu-

lance.

Not a word could I utter; not a word could I hear from the misty form before me. But the fiery eyes burned into mineit seemed as if I stood before a gas flame and gazed intently into it! My hair tingled; the roof of my mouth would not release my tongue, so dry was my palate. And my head seemed to have reached the bursting point.

Through my mind rang the constant demand, in ever increasing volume, "Take that bag to Mr. Oberhouse. Take that bag to Mr. Oberhouse. I'll make an honest man

of you yet!"
Try as I would, I could not shut out that ceaseless yet soundless voice. My head swam. I tried to recover myself, but could not. Fight as I would, I found the leather bag forced into my hands, and felt myself being given what was known in saloon and dance-hall circles at that date as the "burn's rush" up the stairs, one firm hand on my collar, one on the slack of my trousers,

Remorselessly I was forced into the office of Mr. Oberhouse, the firm's president, whom I-had never met. And all the while I was conscious of the two firm hands which I knew of old, and of the boring gaze of two burning, hypnotic eyes in the base of my skull.

But I must say that I made full use of my wits to make the best of a bad bargain. Knowing there was no escape, my natural guile helped me to avoid a dangerous situation. I would make a plausible explanation.
And all the while the voice sounded in
my mind, "Liar, thief, cheat!" even as I
stepped boldly up to Mr. Oberhouse's desk

and placed the bag upon it.

Then, attempting to make my voice the voice of a very sick and frightened youth, I said: "Just before that awful accident, Mr. Newton left this bag with the payroll in the shipping room. I stayed to watch it. When I learned they were hurt, I kept it until the foreman told me to go home."

T'HE president looked at me curiously and opened the bag. The first thing he saw was the bank's slip covering the amount of the payroll. He called one of the office force and they quickly checked it over. Then he told me that I might go home for the day.

And as I walked out of the building, the eyes seemed to follow me. I went home and tried to sleep, but I could not. And somehow or other I could not go out with the old crowd that night, even when they visited me and urred me to come with them.

I told myself that I would not return to work; yet mere force of habit forced me to return the next morning. The first sensation I experienced upon awakening was the steady, malignant gaze of the eyes. As I dressed, ate, walked to work and began trucking, they seemed to follow me.

I soon asked for permission to leave the building for a few minutes and purchased a quart of fiery liquor from a near-by saloon. With each sip I seemed to feel more and

more at ease.

By the time we were ready to load the outgoing delivery wagons, I had determined to continue my systematic thefts. Waiting until the clerk's back was turned, I threw an extra sack of sugar on a wagon.

Then the terrible thing happened. Oh, God, did I see the burning eyes of Jackson peering at me through a mist? Did I feel the cold touch of his invisible hand? The next instant I felt a stinging blow between the eyes and the sack apparently rose in the air and return to the platform!

Twice more I tried this, only to have the same success. I attributed it all to my imagination and to the liquor. The next day, I resolved, I would stay sober and make some money. And I returned to my home that night without making a cent above my pay, for the first time since I had been employed by the company.

The next day I was more than ever con-

scious of the burning gaze of the eyes. I came sober and stayed sober—and on my first attempt to steal, a terrific blow closed one of my eyes and knocked me to my knees! Everyone turned to see the cause of the commotion, and I had to pass it off each fall. But I knew I was a marked man.

For two weeks I lived a constant life of terror. Worse than the company of the bibazing eyes in the warehouse were the visits and lectures in the small hours of the night when I was alone in my room. I would awake in a cold sweat, with the feeling that someone or somebody was in the room with me. As I opened my eyes, there would gradually materialize the form of Jackson as I had last seen him, with the cloven skull and the lulging, firer yeve!

And he would move his bleeding lips and while no sounds came forth, there would ring again in my brain the words of the lectures of which he was so fond. I thought many nights that I would go mad. I would it seleptes until dawn, and my arrival at work in the morning would find me haggard and worn. But they only put it down to my grief and liking for Mr. Jackson, and to the shock of seeing his horrible death.

No longer could I steal, and I was gradually forced to use up the little money that I had saved from my thefts. No longer did I run with the old crowd. The saloons and dance halls knew me no longer.

At the end of two weeks I was called into the office of Mr. Oberhouse. I was sure that I would at least have a city policeman, if not a State trooper, to carry me to jail. But he received me kindly, asking me a few questions about my education and what I had been doing with my time since I left school.

A FTER briefly reviewing my period of long and faithful service, and other "blah" of a like nature, he told me that Mr. Stein was to be made shipping clerk and that I would be billing clerk at a substantial increase of salary.

I thanked him as best I could and stumbled out of the office, cursing Jackson, for I knew that his spirit would never permit me to take the full advantage of my new position, as I could have done, had I been left a free hand.

The next day found me installed as a bill clerk, at the zenith of every truckman's hopes, in a "white-collar job." And, all the while, there loomed at my elbow the figure of Jackson and I could feel his burn-

ing eyes upon me. No longer did I attempt to steal, and I lived on my wages as a matter of course. Since I had no intercourse with the outside world except to eat, sleep and work, and occasionally read a book or magazine, I actually saved money.

THE visits of the eyes at night grew fewer and fewer, until finally, within a year, they ceased altogether. But always I felt their scrutiny from the moment I entered the building where I worked until I left. At the end of a year Stein was transferred to a salesman's job and I went to the

shipping clerk's job.

Fraise of me was on everyone's tongue praise of my industry, loyalty, knowledge; all the nice things people like to say about a young man who has made good from a poor start. But I, of all people, knew that I did not deserve this praise, but that my rise was due to a man who was long since dead and buried. If I had revealed the truth, how many would have believed me? But from a vindictive and revengeful attitude the eyes seemed to have become positude the eyes seemed to have become posi-

tively benevolent.

If I was faced with a new problem, I found a voice whispering the solution in my ear. Or, rather, I did not hear a voice, but vibrations seemed to beat against my brain from somewhere. Was I forced to discipline an unruly employee, surly because of the necessity of taking orders from a mere youth, I found exactly the right words for the occasion outlined in my brain. In short, I had become so used to the presence of a dead man's ghost, spirit, or what you wish to call it, that I accepted his help as a matter of course.

a matter of course.

As a shipping clerk, I was trusted with several thousands of dollars in cash each day, the receipts of the cash sales. Yet each day I, the former thief, was as honest as though I owned the business. At first I lay awake nights, scheming ways and means to steal; yet each day at work I realized that

it was useless.

Force of habit is one of the strongest factors in the world in the upbuilding of character. After a while I found that I had been honest through compulsion for such a length of time that I was honest through choice.

After two years as a shipping clerk I was placed in the main office with a still better salary. I began to go to night school. My father had died, my mother went to live with distant relatives, and in time I lost

sight of all my relatives.

Today I am the sales manager of a whole-sale grocery concern in one of the largest cities in the country, doing millions of dollars' worth of business a year. I own a fine home, several cars, and command the services of a number of servants. Yet I have never married. Who could expect a woman to marry a man who frankly admits that were he left to his own devices he would have been a thief, even in his present station in life, and who not only admits but insists that his rise in life was not dependent upon his own efforts but upon the driving of the ghost of a man long-since dead and buried?

During the War I held a commission in one of the finest combat units of the army, I went to France and returned. I returned without any mention in Corps Orders, but I had risen in the army even more rapidly than in civilian life. And my old friend Jackson had followed me over four thousand miles of Jand and sea, through the War and back, and is with me still.

DHEN I left the army, psychoanalysis was all the rage. Forgetting my rank, I bared my experiences to a high ranking medical officer, a "mut picker" as my men called him. To my surprise, he laughed at me; told me I was absolutely honest, and that Jackson's presence was all the fault of my imagination.

Perhaps he's right, but then he has never had a ghost black his eye. And I think that inside I'm just a little sniveling, thieving, suitching guttersnipe, as Affred Jackson called me twenty years ago, and that the sales manager of the Oberhouse-Mannigton Grocery Company, late Major, 4—th Infantry, is really the creation of Mr, Alfred Jackson, who was killed in the autumn of 1908 by an actident. What do you think?





The MUSTERY of the Floating Knife

Suddenly Waybright saw that his hands were stained with blood. What had happened? Can a man commit murder without knowing it?

JOHN L. WAUBRIGHT

As told to HAROLD STANDISH CORBIN

HE thing has come upon me again.

Is it a sign that I have killed Henry Wentworth, my friend? Am I a murderer? I never intentionally harmed man or woman in my lifeuralsy. In all my dealings with my fellow men in the small chy in which I live, I am an upright, dependable, virtuous citizen—a business man paying my taxes, attending my church, caring for my family. I love my home dearly, and to me there is no greater loveliness in the world than my wife and my children.

Yet as I sit alone at night in my library, when the house is still, the symbol appears. It is horrible, hideous. In some strange, mysterious way my hands are stained with blood!

It comes when I am alone, in that dull period approaching midnight when the brain is weary and the physical body is lax. At first it seemed an unsightly birthmark whose darkened pigment showed with the overheating of the skin. But I had never had such a birthmark. What is it that makes my hands so red?

Tonight it has come again. I am used to its presence now. But it recalls that other strange night when first I found my hands like those of a Lady Macbeth. It was her story, in part, that excited my imagination. Alone in my library, for the family had retired, I pondered over the veil that is so thin between our world and the next, yet so difficult to pierce as long as we retain our mortal faculties. The book lay idly in

In this mood, almost unconsciously, I became aware of moisture on my fingers but I gave it little thought, supposing the warmth of the room had caused my hands to perspire. Still pursuing my thoughts of a supernatural existence, I closed the book and was about to put it away. Suddenly I looked at my fingers.

A strange film held them together. In the shadow of the lamp I thought that the perspiration had mingled with the sizing paste on the book cover. The stickiness persisted. I looked closer. My hands were scarlet.

The cover of the book was gray!

I stared at them. What was this thing? Blood? Immediately I proceeded to the lavatory to cleanse them of the offending coloring and to look for the wound. Under the tap the bowl flowed red. Where I touched the towel a scarlet stain was left.

AGAIN I placed my hands under the tap. Again the bowl was red. Examination showed no wound on my hands. Yet from the tip to the third joint, my fingers bore that uncanny, dripping stain.

I became frightened, believing I had some strange malady that might endanger my life. Hastily I wrapped my hands carefully

in absorbent bandages. As soon as daylight came I would consult a doctor.

Through sleepless hours I worried. With morning, lest I alarm Helen, I put the bloodstained bandages in a package and took them with me as I left the house.

bleeding had ceased. Doctors in small cities hold many confidences and have more secret knowledge of the townspeople than they dare tell. As I called on a practitioner with whom I was on excellent social as well as business terms. I swore him to secrecy as I reported the strange happening of the preceding night, His thorough examination showed me in finest physical condition and without a trace of any malady. Nor could be diagnose the trouble I experienced. There were on record, he said, similar cases where blood was pressed through the skin, but I had none of the symptoms described in his books. He was at a loss to know either what the malady was or how to treat me.

Leaving the case in his hands for further study and investigation, I went about my business, although I confess with no ease of mind. The thing worried me. The thought slowly formed in my mind and persisted there with growing horror that at some time I had taken a human life and that the blood was that of my victim.

I told myself I must not harbor this thought, for in the end it might drive me insane. I had murdered no one, I tried to reason, and I should not give the oppressive fancy any credence. But I could not rid myself of the feeling that the stain on my hands had a sinister and hidden meaning. That night I again sat alone in my library. I had caught up the same book but I could not read. I laid it aside and strode nervously up and down the room. As midnight approached I felt my body grow tense. Queer thrills were coursing down my spine. A strange urge beset me, an uneasiness that I did not understand. I tried again to sit and read, catching up another book. But I could not. I arose from my chair and again paced the floor. Quicker grew my steps. Unconsciously I was working myself into a

And as I clenched my hands I felt it again. Even before I looked, I knew they

veritable frenzy. were crimson. You may imagine how this situation af-

fected me. My life had been calm and ordered, uneventful in its peaceful flow. Now suddenly I, whom my fellows respected, was confronted with the idea that I had taken someone's life. Blood was on my hands. But whose?

Whose was it? Whom had I murdered?

And when?

There was no answer to it. Yet as I peered at my fingers, I was horrified to see them contract into a grotesque and clawlike shape. With that convulsive movement my whole attitude became changed.

I tried to fight it off. I did not want to be a beast. I did not want to be disturbed from my orderly life-especially by such

wild impulses as this,

But I was powerless against it. whole body trembled. My breathing was stertorous and hissing. I had become a fiend. And, looking at my hands, I saw that awful stain upon them. An instant later it seemed to me that I was holding a knife-a rough stone implement that hore the same red stain as my hands. It was a strange delusion, for after a moment I saw the knife float off into space and disappear.

THAT was but the beginning of that horrible night and the day that followed The condition of my hands persisted. I held them up to the light and was afraid. Laughter, shrill nervous laughter, leaped to my lips. I wanted to run away, to escape, turned my hands this way and that to study them. And still I laughed, the hysterical laughter of terror.

Then, as I stood there in the center of my library floor, I became aware that I was not alone. There was no movement at first to apprize me of that other Presence. It was instinct that told me—that strange sixth sense that comes upon one sometimes in the mysterious hours of night.

But the Thing was somewhere in the room. I could hear it moving rustlingly from corner to corner, now approaching me, now carefully maneuvering to get behind me.

I pered into the corners where the intangible creature seemed to be. As it moved, so did 1—backwards and sideways, always to meet it, to face it in the event that something materialized. Chills surged up and down my spine. A fever seized me. By turns I was hot and cold in terror of that unknown Thing creeping here and there, somewhere near me but always unseen.

SUDDENLY, it sprang at me. I felt its betterlibe, unseen fingers at my throat I A body that sometimes had weight and sometimes seemed only nebulous crashed against mine. I tried to grapple with it to defend myself. It bore me this way and that. If hurled me against the table. Chairs overturned in our struggle. Although my hands encircled it, I could not tell whether it was the spirit of man or beast. The Thing was half solid but without enough substance for me to visualize it.

But mixed with fear was the urge for self-protection. If only this Thing that attacked me would appear! Then I could defend myself. I was ready to do battle with it. I, the peaceable business man, whose tenor of life had heretofore flowed so evenly, was ready to protect myself, and my family that lay sleeping unstairs.

Suddenly a brilliant, dazzling light encompassed me. It came without sound. But it was a great brilliance that blinded me. Then darkness, rolling in like gigantic waves of the sea. I swaved, staggered, fell.

I knew no more.

Ages afterward I regained consciousness. That brilliant light still scenned to illumin everything, and in its radiance I felt detached, ethereal, apart. Familiar things were about me in the library, but they seemed as vague as I. And filling my very soul with an overpowering, compelling mandate, was the desire to follow that Thing that had attacked me, and for the common good destroy it. I looked at my hands. They were marked with that a wful stain.

As I recall the experiences of that night and day, it is strange how material things entered into that unearthly state into which I seemed to have passed. I remember following a habit and looking at my watch. I must have been unconscious several hours, for the time was 5:45. I stole stealthily upstairs and in their chambers found my wife and the children calmly sleeping.

whe and the chindren calmy steeping. I did not try to fathom the mystery of the night hours. I could not understand—the blood that had been on my hands, the unseen Thing that had attacked me, the great light like a vivid electrical spark, and the ensuing unconsciousness. I did not care what supernatural power had designs upon my mentality, my peace of mind or even my life itself. I was possessed only by the desire to follow that Thing and destroy it. And in conformance with that desire I left the house. I had no definite objective. It was a strange urge for me to go, heedlessly, without destination, anywhere, as long as I could go.

I did not wait for hat or coat. Quietly, so as not to awaken my sleeping family, I went out of the door. The morning was cool with the crispness of autumn. I hesitated as I stepped on the porch, and looked up and down the familiar street. There were the maple trees along the walks, brilliant in the foliage of autumn. There were the orderly fences and hedges enclosing each lawn. The smooth-paved surface of

the street was meticulously neat.

But a silence so acute that it beat upon my ears oppressed me. It was as though I had entered a great void. Where were the normal sounds of early

where were the normal sounds or early morning—the clatter of milkmen, the rattle of surface cars, the call of laborers early on their way to work, their footsteps ringing on the walk?

And where were the people, the horses, the cars and the milk wagons?

I HAD heard of sounds that had their complements—positive and negative vibrations which, meeting, merge so there is no sound at all. At first I hought that through some unusual atmospheric condition I might have encountered such a phenomenon. But surely the living individuals going about their thousand and one duties of the day would have appeared.

Yet they did not. There was no one anywhere. I felt depressed, lonely. Fear came upon me again. It was the fear of being the one person living in a city of the dead.

Still, the inhabitants were not alone dead. They were not there at all. My footsteps clattered echoingly along the walks. I whistled in the hope that the bark of a dog would answer, or a newsboy rush to me with extended paper as he peddled his route. But the sound of my footsteps and the trill of my whistle came back hollowly from among the houses and from down the street.

My excitement at this strange state of affairs became so intense I could hardly control myself. I strode to the edge of the curb and gazed about me for some sign of human life. I turned back to a hedge and stared across the yards to locate some living thing. Everywhere I looked there was no sign of life. It was as though a scourge had fallen upon the place, killed the inhabitants and swept them up in a great cloud and carried them away.

CAN you imagine the state I was in? Can you realize my terrible feeling of loneliness when I contemplated that I was the only person alive in that place-that all the others had gone away and left me?

What had happened? I asked myself. Were other cities stricken by this terrible scourge? Were the teeming millions of people the country over, swept away in some awful upheaval of nature? Had I alone been left of them all? What was this terrifying, devastating cataclysm that had taken place? And why was I, of them all, overlooked, forgotten?

We all are creatures of habit. I thought again of newspapers. They would have the story. They would give me the answer. whistled loudly. I tried to call a newsboy, one of the fraternity usually so insistent

at this hour of the day.

None appeared. Not a sound broke upon Not one living thing, human being, dog, horse, or even flying insect was present. Life had ceased. I was the only vestige of animal existence in that entire city. Except-perhaps my family. I had left them sleeping. With that thought I turned and ran, sprintingup the street and back to my home like a runner for a prize,

My fingers could hardly fit the key to the lock. Frantically pulling open the door, I dashed up the stairway to the floor above. I burst into the room, glad in the thought that here were human beings-company for my loneliness, creatures like myself that could give and receive love.

The scene that met my eyes turned me cold with fear. The rooms were unoccupied. The beds were in order, carefully and neatly made up. But my wife and children whom I had left there, sleeping soundly, a few minutes before, were gone!

Wild-eyed, in a frenzy, I searched the house from garret to cellar. Every possible hiding-place I investigated. Clothes were in order on their hooks; not an article of furniture had been disturbed. But as for my loved ones, I could find no trace of them. Like everyone else in the city, they

had disappeared! My search fruitless, I dashed out of the house. Distracted by the loss of my family, forgetting in that new trouble that I had met no one outside, my first instinct was to summon help, to tell the neighbors that some terrible thing had happened to my

wife and children.

Outside the house that oppressive stillness that was louder than sound, again beat upon me. Again I remembered that I was the only living thing in that place of silence. Wild with that growing fear of being alone, I ran to a neighboring police station whose door I found welcomingly open. I rushed in, ready to shout my incredible story into the ears of any policeman who would listen.

My footsteps echoed in silent rooms, The lieutenant's desk was vacant. wardroom was deserted. Domino boards and a row of chairs were reminders of the uniformed occupants that once had spent their leisure moments there, but who now had been swept away by some unseen, mys-

terious force.

Where had everyone gone to? I did not know. I hunted frantically. I ran up one street and down another, becoming breathless and exhausted in my search. But not

one living thing could I find. I staggered against one of those maples that lined my own street. I struck its trunk to find whether or not it was real. My fist rebounded. The tree was solid enough. But as I rubbed my hurt knuckles I suddenly was amazed to see that once more my hands were dripping with blood.

IT was the first time I had seen them that way in the daylight and I inspected them more carefully than ever before. Wiping away the stain, I found the skin unbroken. There was not the minutest abrasion that would permit the blood to flow. It did not seem like an exudation from my own body. The more I studied my hands, the more I was convinced that the blood came from some uncanny agency outside my body.

But from where? I pondered that, and as I pondered, absorbed in the question, I happened to glance up. Not far down the street I caught the faintest flicker of a shadow. Something had moved! Something in all that quiet, deserted world had disturbed the scene.

Quickly I forgot the appearance of my hands. At last I had found something that was alive. Instantly I started running towards the point and, as the impression of that faint shadow grew on my mind, I became more eager to discover it.

Excited in the pursuit, I swept the scene before me, my eyes darting this way and that in the hope of locating the object,

AGAIN I caught the flicker. Now I per-ceived a form skulking from tree to tree and pausing behind hedges. I ran towards it, my voice imploring it to wait for me. Here at last was life! Here was some living thing besides myself in this place of silence and desertion. Here was a companion, though of what sort I could not tell.

Suddenly I saw the figure plainly. It was like that of a man, but covered with some kind of shaggy apparel. Its form was grotesque and simian-like. Its gait was

loping and secretive.

I saw it dash behind another tree and wait for me to approach. And as I came within speaking distance of it I saw a cruel face leering at me with protruding jaw and half-shut, peering eyes. Its expression was more bestial than human. The forehead was flattened backward from the shaggy eyebrows, and coarse, rough hair of the texture and color of hemp fell in long, matted locks from the skull.

Yet there was something familiar about it. I cudgeled my brain in an effort to recall who or what the Thing was. For a time its identity escaped me as I stood looking at the creature-and then slowly it began to dawn upon me that some prehistoric ancestor of a very good friend of mine might have resembled that Thing that stood before me!

Strange as it may seem, that person was the State's prosecuting attorney of the district of which my city was a part. His name was Henry Wentworth. He and I had grown up together from boyhood. In a way we had been rivals. In school we two had stood highest in our classes and, when report cards were issued, we two ran to each other first with a desire to see which, in the total, was ahead. As time went on, he had been chosen over me to go into a local law office as clerk and it was from that beginning that he had risen to the office of prosecutor-a position that

I might have held if I had studied law Yet I had prospered in the business to which I had turned. Henry and I had courted the same girl, but I had won her. He and I played golf in the local country club, and in that I led him. But he had been made president of the club in which I was but an ordinary member. Still, I had other civic honors given to me,

So it had gone. Sometimes he had been ahead of me in one way, while I was ahead in another-rivals always in a friendly way. but rivals still. I wonder if always, deep in our hearts, there had not been envy and jealousy, and while on the surface we were glad of any forging ahead by the other, each of us harbored a secret ill will that we would have been loath to admit.

Be that as it may, here I was face to face with this creature that resembled Wentworth, alone in that place of silence, each studying the other, he partly hid behind one of the big maples and I standing quite exposed on the walk. About me the silence battered like recurring waves thundering on the seashore. And before me was the only living thing in the world.

"Henry!" I said at last. "You are Henry, aren't you?"

The half-human creature blinked at the sound of my voice, not comprehending.
"Henry," I said, "what has happened?

Where has everyone gone? And what has changed you so?"

The creature was uneasy, shifting its posi-Suddenly, from its lips, came that moan-the sound I had heard in the library when the unseen Thing attacked me. Unmistakably it was the same. I started back in amazement. It was an animal moan, a sound of anger, a snarl almost,

THE creature became agitated. Not once did it look at me, but it continued that sound, half moan, half snarl. Its eyes looked everywhere but at me. And then I saw the shaggy covering on its half naked body was not the cloak that it had appeared to be at first but was the creature's own hair.

Now the hair began to rise along its spine as the creature half turned-as the hair rises along a dog's back when he faces combat. Now the creature slapped its hands against the tree trunk and its teeth chattered angrily. Its attitude became menacing. The biceps in its muscular arms stood out tensely. It moved its feet, seeking a solid footing and I knew it was preparing to attack.

I looked about me, up that quiet street of homes, for help or for some place to seek refuge. I found myself not so much afraid as seeking instinctively some point of vantage from which I could repel the attack

that seemed imminent. And then I found it.

Close beside me was a great rock, ragged and sharp, that formed a natural defensive position. If I could stand on top of it, the creature before me would find himself at a disadvantage, for I would be higher than he and could strike down at him as he reached for me-

UICKLY I sprang upon it and looked about me. The street of homes that was so familiar to me was becoming enveloped in a fog. I had little time to think of that, however.

Henry, if it really was he, darted backward from behind the tree and picked up a heavy stone. With a quick movement and with surprising strength, he hurled it at me, I dodged it with spontaneous cleverness that amazed even myself. I wondered how I had learned that trick.

And then another amazing thought entered my mind. Where had Henry found that stone? As I have said, the street and its paved surface had been meticulously neat. Where could be have got it?

And still another matter of amazement, Where had that rock come from, which was now serving me as a fortress? I had taken advantage of its shelter unthinkingly. But surely I never had seen it before. Surely the builders of the street never would have permitted it to remain there. They would have torn it out with dynamite.

Now Henry was chattering with rage behind the tree. And as I looked at him, I saw that the tree had changed. It no longer was a maple but some kind of palm !

I hardly could believe my eyes. I shut them, shook my head to clear my senses and took a deep breath of air in my lungs! My eyes opened quickly. There was the tang of the sea in that breath! But our city lay hundreds of miles from the seacoast.

Once more I looked about me and again amazement seized me. The homes had disappeared. No farther away than at the corner where Duffield Street had been, waves of the ocean were beating upon a low shore! The water, as far out as I could see, glistened in the morning sun. In the other direction, which had led toward my office, there was a gradual rise to hills in the distance, and in between was a tangle of woods and jungle.

The rock behind which I hid, protruded from rough ground that ran almost to the Coarse grass and strange weeds with small, bright blossoms grew from the rugged ground. The air felt hot and moist. and far above us, in the sky, strange birds floated lazily against the blue.

But all these things were taken in at a glance. I had no time to cogitate upon them. Henry was before me, craftily piling up stones; it was his evident intention to continue the attack with those as ammunition. His teeth continued to chatter. His fingers were strong and thick and agile as an ape's, and the backs of his hands were covered with that hemp-colored hair,

Quickly he straightened up, a stone in either hand, and eyed me evilly. But I no longer was afraid. Now I knew the answer to that strange urge that had sent me from the house. Now I felt I was face to face with that ghostly presence that had attacked me in the library. At last, I was confronted by something tangible. I felt I should do humanity a service by destroying this mon-

ster before me, if I could.

An overpowering sense of anger seized me and hastily I looked about for ammunition of the sort he used. I found plenty of it at hand. I dodged behind the rocky barrier again and in an instant I had acquired plenty:

Craftily I raised my body, exposing as little of it as possible, and I hurled my stone. He saw it coming, sprang aside and howled in rage. Before I could dodge, he had thrown in return. Fortunately my attack had upset him and his aim was poor. But the stone grazed my head, inflicting a gash which did little real damage to me though it bled freely.

WITH that letting of blood I found myself possessed of an anger as great as his. Once more I sought a stone and once more I raised my hand to hurl it. All this time the events had been so rapid I had not realized that my battle with Henry was primitive, animalistic, prehistoric. But happening to observe my raised hand, new surprise swept over me as I saw that it, like Henry's, was rough and hairy! I stopped in that pose and looked at myself. My clothing had disappeared. In its place was a covering of hair quite like Henry's except that I was dark.

Moreover in the excitement of the moment I found my teeth chattering in nervous rage, and with my free hand I pounded upon my breast like a gorilla challenging its

enemy.

I gasped in amazement. I became crest-fallen. Observing Henry's sloping fore-head, I raised my own hand and felt of mine. It was like his. And then I understood. We no longer were eivilized men living in the Twentieth Century. Through some strange supernatural force we had reverted to the primeval. We were ape-men, fighting on that uncharted strand. We were primordial, filled only with the base instinct to kill!

ND now I knew why we fought. We were rivals. We always had been rivals. The veneer of civilization had made us pretend to be good friends. But stripped of all that—stripped of repression and social custom and rules and laws—we hated each other at heart. And now, transported by some strange atavism into the world that existed before the dawn of history, we were to fight it out—to hurt, to kill, not with methods employed by modern man, but with tooth and nail, with bludgeon and stone! And though we were not able to reason upon it, it was understood that only the best man would win.

Further reason left me then. What small intelligence I had was fully employed in trying to outwit my savage enemy. Without plan or purpose Henry was showering stones upon my barrier, regardless of where or how they landed. He was in a gibbering rage and vented his anger by hurling those stones as rapidly as he could pick them up and heave them with his mighty arm.

and neave them with his mighty arm.

But in his madness he exposed hinself unnecessarily, without regard to the excellent target he made. Shrewdy I selected a
particularly sharp stone whose weight was
easy in my hand and whose edges were
as jaggedly cutting as a saw. I waited
until he had bent to tug a stone from its
bed in the earth, and then I hurfed mine.

It struck him in the side. It brought a snarl of bestal rage from him as he tumbled, sprawling, upon the ground. Blood flowed from the wound. He clasped his hands to his side and rolled upon the ground in agony.

in agony.

My blow had been well directed. If I had reasoned at all then, I would have known the stone not only had cut the flesh but had crushed the bone beneath it. Henry's snarl changed to a low moan of agony. For a moment he lay quiet and I

thought he had succumbed. Cautiously left my retreat and crept upon him.

As I did so, my attention was caught by the sight of another creature at the edge of the woods. I stared in surprise and experienced an odd thrill of pleasure. This creature was different from ourselves. Long, golden locks hung to the waist and while the body was covered with hair, it was downy and fine in texture. Also the creature's limbs were rounded and graceful and there was a dainty poise of the body that neither Henry nor I possessed.

Looking back on it, I know now that the creature was my wife, my dearly belowed Helen whom early that morning I had left bleeping in her bed and whom, later, I could not find. But I did not understand all that as I gazed upon the fair creature. I only knew that a sense of pride and power thrilled me as she danced about in the edge of the woods and clapped her hands joyfully because of my victory over the prostrate rival.

If the my victory was short-lived. I was too intent on the creature to observe that Henry was slowly crawling to his here caching for another missile. My first that timation that he had renewed the attack was perhaps the fleeting shadow of the stone as it sped through the air from his hand. Too late I tried to dodge. It struck me full between the shoulders and pitched me forward flat upon my face. Nor could I rise again, although I retained control of my faculties. I suffered terrible pain.

And now Henry had discovered the fair creature in the woods. Now his childish mind had become taken with her and, instead of following up his advantage with me, slowly he made his way toward her.

I SAW his movement. I was filled with sach a rage as I did not know could enter a mortal being. No sound issued from my mouth but, clutching the earth, grasping now a rock for support and now a branch to help me, I struggled to my feet. The pain in my back was intense and I bent almost double. But hatred overcame physical agony, and gradually I straightened, though every breath was like the stab of a dager.

My roving eyes at that instant caught sight of a long flint knife lying there in the grasses. I picked it up and found it easy in my hand. The handle was worn as though by much use and the blade was jagged and stained. I hardly noticed these things. It seemed quite natural for me to have it in my hand and childlike happiness

My bare feet made no sound as I leaped from rock to rock and through the grass, making my way toward Henry, who was so intent on the creature of the woods. He seemed abashed as he approached her, and slowed his pace. But there existed between the creature and myself some bond of understanding that Henry did not have. So my attention was directed to him.

M Y own pain was forgotten now. Swiftly I came behind him. With a cry of exultation I drove the knife at his back. Quick as the dart of a serpent he dodged but the rough blade inflicted a wound in his shoulder. He stumbled and went down. I was upon him instantly. With that strange, delightful creature looking on, we struggled in as desperate a hand-to-hand encounter as ever woman withessed.

There were no rules to govern us, no courtesies of the modern sporting field. No quarter would be given, no sense of fairness encouraged. It was give-and-take, without mercy, without reason. We were ape-men, animals, fighting to the death.

For a space we struggled, biting, kicking, scratching, pounding, now locked in tense embrace, now falling apart in an effort to employ some weapon, some strong or clink

The sun poured down upon us. The grass and flowers were crushed beneath our weight. A score of cuts and scratches were stinging from the salt sweat of my body. We were plastered with mud and dirt.

We were plastered with mud and dirt. Now we were at it again, heaving, straining, tugging. Now Henry would gain the advantage and now I. Sometimes I would hurt him worfully and his snarl answered my gain. Then, again, as we floundered upon the ground, his crushing force would make the world grow black before me and a cry of pain would fly to my lips. There was nothing scientific about the struggle. It was sheer brute force pitted against brute force. It was a battle to gouge, to tear, to rend, to break.

Sometimes Henry caught my hair and battered my head against the rocks. Sometimes I ground his face into the earth and cudgeled him with my fists.

After what seemed hours of that horrible struggle, I felt Henry weakening in my grasp. His body did not recover so quickly from the hurts I gave him. His movements lacked that lightning speed that first he had

used. Dimly I understood. The wounds I had given him with the larged stone and the knife must have been sapping his strength. Little by little his resistance grew less; his force waned. Awating an opportunity, I suddenly heaved him upon his back. Though he kicked and scratched and gouged at my eyes, I held him there, my fingers closing around his hairy throat, my body astride his. His breath came in horrid gasps. Still he fought me.

But his struggles had no effect now, and his efforts to blind me were puny and frail. His own eyes were glazing; his hands fell limply at his sides. But I would not let up even yet. Tenacionsly I held to him. Beneath my hands I could feel a faint pulsation of the great arteries in his throat.

A few feet away I saw the flint knife. Swiftly I reached for it. I knew neither fear nor horror—I was impelled only by the primitive instinct to protect Helen, to save myself from the menace of that other apeman. But it was the end for Henry Wentworth

Such was the work of the primitive conqueror. And I knew that had Henry claimed victory over me, he would have had no more pity than I. This was primordial rage—the instinct for self-preservation

And my hands were red with Henry's blood!

I rose to my feet. But suddenly I was terribly exhausted, weak, overcome. Now the pain in my back renewed itself. Dizziness whirled in my sodden brain. I felt myself fainting.

And before I could stay myself, I toppled over beside Henry, unconscious.

IT was strange to find my wife and the doctor bending over me. For an instant my mind was back where it had left off, and I looked about for the glint of the ocean, the palm trees, the rocks—and the body of my victim. But I was on the floor of my own library. Close by was the book I had been reading and had dropped. I was fully clothed and the chair in which I had been stiting was just back of my head. The pain between my shoulders was so intense that I monaned.

"What is it, dear?" Helen cried.

"My back," I whispered. "He hurt me

terribly with that stone."

"Who hurt you?" she asked, her voice filled with compassion for me.

Even in my misery quick thoughts flitted through my mind. How could I tell her it was Henry? How could I make her and the doctor understand that I had been in a world millions of years old-that, somehow transported by a supernatural force, I had been upon a long journey back into antiquity all in the space of that early morning? Like a child I answered:

"I don't know; he did."

"Vertigo," said the doctor with quick decision, letting go my pulse. "Dizziness overcame him and he fell. Struck his back against the table and cut his head. None of it serious. I'll attend to the wound on his forehead and then we must get him to bed. His nerves are upset. He needs rest and quiet."

FOR weeks I lay in a daze, sometimes recalling the strange experiences in that land of fantasy, sometimes unable to think at all. Helen hovered over me, quieting my moans, soothing me with her dear ministrations. For a time I was in a stupor from which only her presence would rouse me. Often I dreamed of her as she had stood at the edge of the woods and watched that primitive battle. But gradually my disordered mind returned to normal. After weeks of convalescence I recovered a part of my strength, and one day, still weak and shaken, returned to my business affairs.

Not until then did I learn of the tragedy that had occurred in our city. While I lay unconscious during those long weeks of illness, a terrible thing had happened. A friend of mine-a very dear friend-had been killed, murdered! His body was found one morning on the floor of his library. There was a flint knife-an old relic of

some sort-lying near-by.

A search by the police revealed no clue. The doors and windows of the house were locked. There had been a struggle. Broken chairs, broken vases-general confusion in the room-testified to that. But strangely there was no clue to it all. The minutest investigation revealed nothing on which the

police could begin their search.

No one had told me about it in my days of illness. They thought the knowledge would be a dangerous shock to my shattered nerves. For the body upon the library floor, the body so horribly done to death, was that of my friend and chum, Henry Wentworth! And the crime had been committed the

very night that I had been stricken by that strange illness in my own library! I did not tell my story. I did not enlighten the police. There was no evidence that I had killed Henry. Naturally the strange coincidence of two prominent men, the closest of friends, meeting misfortune upon exactly the same night excited some comment but no one ever seemed to connect the two strange affairs.

Yet I am not the same as before, great question fills my mind and sometimes drives me frantic. Did I really kill Henry Wentworth? Did I attack him in his home and by some dexterous means, while my mind was not my own, effect escape and provide against any suspicion? Yet how could The doors and windows were locked, they said.

What then? Through some strange agency were we changed into spirits and transported into the dim past? Were we reduced to base symbols of our lowest natures and made to fight and rend and tearand, in my case, kill-over some ancient grudge that was old when the world was new?

I do not know. I cannot understand it all. But the sight of blood on my hands. late at night when the house is still, causes me to wonder, and, wondering, I am driven almost mad.

I have never again felt or seen the Thing that sprang upon me in the library that Only the blood on my hands-Henry's blood, perhaps-reminds me of that terrible morning on that lonely ocean strand. I attend church, I am president of the country club since Henry's death, I go on as an eminently respectable business man in my home city, paying my taxes, reading my paper, caring for my family. But I have adopted the almost constant custom of wearing gloves. Even in my library at home I wear them lest my books become stained.

A ND often I wonder in what future exis-tence I shall meet Henry again, for in my heart I know that though he is dead, his spirit awaits me somewhere, some time, for I have not forgiven him nor has he forgiven me. Though we were friends, and though sometimes I place a wreath on his grave, I know we must go on as rivals through the infinite spaces of eternity. It has not been revealed to me where our rivalry and our hatred began, or where it will end. But this I have learned; hate, envy and malice are emotions which, like love, do not end with the grave.



COME of seafaring stock; for generations, ancestors of mine have saided the high seas. Innumerable tales are cherished by my family concerning, the good old days, even as far back as Queen Elizabeth's reign. But sometimes I wonder if those gallant ancestors of mine ever saw a hundredth part of what I have seen. Gay, fearless adventurers—every one of them! And yet I doubt if their

courage was taxed so terribly as mine. The sea still has a wonderful fascination for me, even though I am over eightly years old and no longer have the thrill of sailing my vessels into unknown waters. Ships of today pursue their courses secreely, Storms come up, but the huge ships are fitted to meet every kind of danger—they know no fear. Civilization has killed the old excitement—danger has lost its terrible meaning.

I have seen strange things—ghasily things! Ships have gone down from under me, but in some miraculous way the sea has always proved my friend, buoping me up until help arrived. Men I have loved have been swallowed up before my eyes in the gray waters; storms of unbridled fury have struck the wildest fear in my heart; monsters, breathing an indescribable horror, have terrified me beyond expression and yet I love the sea passionately. It is a human thing to me.

If I have seen its tempestuous moods, I have also seen it gentle as a sleeping child. I have watched ships gliding across it like white-winged birds and marveled at the intenseness of its blue, unflected by foam or rippling whitecaps. I have seen it languid as a blue lagoon, mirroring the wooder of a starry night. Passionate, angry, restless or serene, I love it!

One has to see it as I have seen it, to appreciate it; one has to go where I have been to understand its mysteries—for without seeing it is difficult to believe. I can only hope that the truth of my words will sink into your mind—that the facts I tell you will appear as vivid to you as they did to me. Were I a great speaker, it would be an easy task, but after all I'm only an old seafaring adventurer, I can only tell you in plain language the most amazing experience that ever crossed my path during my sixty years of traveline.

Rose from the Sea

"The ship's doomed!" the Portuguese shrieked. "And that damned parson is the cause! He's a Jonah!" Little did Captain Boud guess the awful truth of those words

It was in the '80's, Forty-odd years ago this Christmas, I arrived in Rio de Janeiro, to take on a cargo of coffee. I had some trouble with my crew whilst lading, finding out in time the second mate was a scoundrel. I got rid of him and a third of the crew deserted the next morning. Birds of a feather! I had to go out and scour the docks of Rio for men-they were hard to procure, but I managed to find enough sailors to man the Mary Elizabeth. You can't pick- and choose at a time like that. I had to take what I could get, and a motlev-looking crew they were!

That same night I was drinking a cup of coffee in one of my favorite haunts. I usually had a table to myself, but the place was crowded and the waiter asked if I would object to someone sharing my table. Imagine my surprise when the man who came to sit with me turned out to be an old friend! Hadn't seen him for twenty years! The Reverend Philip Pritchard-I knew him better as plain Phil. We had been schoolmates although he was my junior by a few years; but when I went to sea

I lost track of him.

PHIL had always been a little queer—one of those dreamy boys every school has; never strong enough to join in the healthy outdoor games. I think that was a bitter thing to him, for he always watched us rather wistfully. However, he made up for it in the classroom-he had extraordinary brain powers and his studies were a joy to him. None of us were surprised when we heard he had gone into the church.

I found he hadn't changed much. same pale face with its large, dreamy black eyes. If anything, he looked more fragile than ever-his skin had a startling, transparent look. He was tall as I am-and I'm six feet two in my stocking feet-but with the strength of a kitten. Queer person, Phil. He was very reticent and made few friends, but if he was your friend, it was something to be counted very much worth while.

To make a long story short, I told him I was sailing for Liverpool the next day and he broached the idea of going back to England with me. He said he had a great desire to see the old folks again. He did things like that, on the spur of the moment, and when he said he wanted to sail with me next day. I knew he really meant it.

THE Mary Elizabeth was not a fast trader, but she was a good storm ridernothing ever seemed to faze her. So I agreed to take him over, though as a rule I carried no passengers. I told him where we were docked and that we sailed at noon, and he vowed he'd be there. Even knowing Phil as well as I did, I was a little skeptical of his turning up-but about ten o'clock the following morning I saw him driving along the dock in a carriage affair with his trunk piled crazily above him, and a few minutes later he was aboard the Mary Elizabeth. We sailed at noon.

From the minute we left Rio, there was something the matter with the ship. She seemed reluctant to leave the shelter of the beautiful harbor. Usually she rode out joyously, as if the coming trip was something to be enthusiastic about; but this time she kind of limped out and breasted the waves with an air of repugnance. I wasn't the only one who noticed ita number of my old hands mentioned the fact to me, especially my treasured engineer, a gigantic, rugged-looking Scotch-

"The old gal's actin' kinda queer," he said to me when he came up from below. "She don't seem to have her usual spirit. I dunno what ails her."

I told him he was an old fool. I wouldn't let him know I was thinking the sante thing. He left me, shaking his head. You couldn't fool that canny Scot!

Phil didn't leave his cabin for a couple of days; the weather got the best of him. It was rough and blustery, and the Mary Elizabeth shuddered and trembled like a piece of cork tossed aimlessly on the waves. She seemed to have no resistance—no fighting powers. It was enough to make a sailor sick, let alone a landlubber. Phil mastered it on the third day and came up on deck looking a little green and washed out but otherwise quite chery.

DERY few of the men knew we carried a good deal of excitement when Phil appeared in his clerical garb. They were a super-stitious bunch of men, and those I hired at such short notice seemed more so than my own crew. I could see them looking at Phil askance as he walked up to me in his mournful black clothes. They were muttering among themselves and were evidently stirred to a nitted of excitement.

Had I been Phil, I'd have felt it intuitively, but he seemed blissfully ignorant of the excitement he was causing. Leaving me, he strolled along the deck to chat with the sailors. They watched his coming with wide-open eyes, but when he spoke to them they could only mumble uninatelligible reolles. Few of them could, soeak English.

One by one, they slunk off, until he found himself alone. He must have noticed that! But he never said anything to me.

But he never said anything to me.

The bad weather increased; it became positively foul. With a heavy fog creeping up by the hour and the ocean getting up a terrific swell, the Mary Elizabeth seemed to be in for a pretty rough trip—the elements were dead against us. The bad weather seemed to disagree with the crew in general; they were sullen, almost insubordinate when I gave my orders. I didn't like the look of things at all. The whole ship seemed under the influence of some rotten spell. I couldn't make head nor tail of it.

I had been on watch most of the day, but as the night drew near, the atmosphere became a little clearer, so I took a few minutes of leaving my first mate in charge of

things.

I was walking along the deck, enjoying my pipe, when I heard the hushed whispering of voices. The fact that the voices were low and secretive forced me to dart quickly in the shadows—I hoped to glean some information to throw a light on the trouble.

Having traveled so much, I know a smattering of pretty nearly every language. It was a Portuguese speaking. The man was very much in earnest, his voice tense with suppressed emotion.

"The ship's under a spell!" he was whis-

pering fearfully to a group of men crouched around him. "You know what that means! We're doomed! Soon we'll be rotting at the bottom of the sea. Think of it!—rot-ting—the flesh eaten off our bones—never to see our homes again—sucked down to a horrible death! But it's not the weather; it's not the ship. Don't let anybody fool you: it's a Jonah!"

He waved his arms dramatically as he came to the climax of his amazing theory, but I could see the impression he had made on those superstitious minds. He spoke with such a chilling certainty—even I felt a shiver of apprehension rin down my

spine.

They mouned dismally among themselves, already giving themselves up for lost—and then I thought it high time to interfere before he started any more of his infernal ravings. I strode quickly out of the shadows and went straight at them, giving the Portuguese a sharp cuff over the

"None of that," I said angrily. "If I see or hear of any of you men talking together again, there'll be trouble—I promise you

that! Now clear off!"

Some of them were inclined to whine, a few of them crept sneakily off, but the Portuguese stood up and came over to where I was standing, thrusting his face close to mine.

"It's the truth," he said hoarsely, and I felt his breath hot and angry against my check. "The ship's haunted—it's under a spell! And that damned parson is the cause of all the trouble!" Ite turned around and faced the men who still remained, beginning to speak louder in his excitement. "I tell you, we've got a Jonah aboard! Isten!"

HOW she creaked! The wind whistled and howled around the gaunt mast-heads, causing the ropes to groan eerily as they swayed to and fro. The waves broke with a warning hiss against the ship's sides; the air sectled with frightening sounds.

"I seen thing,!" he almost screamed at me, "I seen things pendent seen and the of the ship—things with wet, almy see, all it my with a bute light! I seen then on the dock: creeping along in the shadows looking down at me from the masts with their awful eyes! I can't get away from them! It's hamted, I tell you. Ask Pete, ask Franco—they seen them, too!" He clutched at my coat in a feraey of terror. half choking with sobs. He was a pitiable

sight to see.

"You're a fool," I said quietly, hoping to
calm him with my own quietness. But it

seemed to incense him the more.

"Who let him on board?" he cried. "Who brought him on the shin? You did you let

brought him on board? he cried. "Who brought him on the ship? You did—you let him on! He's the cause of it all. We'll get him if those things don't! Oh, God, we'll all be drowned!" He finished with a horrible wail and fled down the shadowed deck.

I TURNED to the others with my hands clenched. The thing had to be stopped right there and then. Their supersitious minds clung so tenaciously to anything of that sort and, besides, I began to fear for Phil's safety. There was no knowing what might happen. I told them plainly if I heard anything else of the matter I would be forced to resort to strong measures. They knew well enough what I means—chains. As for the Portugues, I'd have him put in the bolf—he was mad.

They listened to me sullenly, and then drifted off to their various quarters.

How I cursed the day when I had to engage men at such short notice! And I cursed the wretched weather, too, and the uncanny atmosphere of the ship. Fate seemed dead against us.

I relit my pipe when the last of the men had shambled off, but although there wasn't as soul near me I had a peculiar feeling of another presence. It wasn't a hallucinamouter presence it wasn't a hallucinamous as well as the second of the s

The eyes of the unseen watcher seemed to bore holes into my very soul. My blood tingled, my heart beat in short, painful hrobs. H found it difficult to breathe—to' think rationally with the horror of my feelings. It was suffocating. The dismal hole of the wind increased my uneasiness and the dark shadows about me seemed thick with life. I could feel the sweat standing out on my forehead, Then I hurried up to my cabin, fearing the superstitions of a crazed Portugues had got the better of me.

I was relieved to see the Scotchman waiting for me, but before I spoke to him I helped myself to a good stiff drink to recover my composure and soothe my nerves.

When I sat down, he started a tirade against the way the ship was behaving. I

cut him short and told him to go down and tell Mr. Pritchard I wanted to see him.

For some strange reason he had taken a violent liking for Phil—I say "strange," because he cared for so few people. It was a blessing to me, as no other member of the crew would go within a stone's throw of Phil's cabin. A few minutes later they came into my cabin.

"Have a drink?" I pushed the whisky over to Phil, but only the Scotchman helped himself. "Do you notice anything strange about this ship?" I asked quickly, hoping to take him by surprise and read his ex-

pression.

"Why, no," he answered a little slowly.
"I don't think I've noticed anything,
Only—" he paused as if reluctant to say
what he intended. "Only—the men seem
to avoid me. I don't think they like me."
He spoke rather wistfully—anything of that
sort would hurt Phil bitterly. He was
hypersensitive.

"Ah! you've noticed that!" It was a difficult thing I had to say, but I was determined Phil should know. "It's a lot of dammed nonsense," I began apologetically, "but it's an old tale—the men have got it into their heads it's untucky to have a clergyman on board. You've probably heard that before—all sailors have an aversion to a minister aboard their ship. They're a lot of superstitious devils, and once a thing like that gets into their heads, it's about hopeless."

"I'm sorry about that," Phil said simply.
"It's not your fault," the Scotchman broke in quickly, flushing at his outspokenness.

"Of course it's not your full! Good heavens, it's the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of. But there's no doubt the men are upset. I was wondering," I went on, "if you'd object to wearing a plain collar—I mean, if you discarded your clerical dress, they might forget their superstitions."

"I haven't any other kind," he answered with a quiet smile.

By that I knew he meant he wouldn't do what I asked.

"It's only that I'm a little afraid for you, Phil—they do such crazy things, and I do such crazy things, and I do such crazy things, and I necessarily. I wish you would," I begge him again.



"I'm not afraid," he answered, "If---" A wild scream rang out above the tearing of the wind-a fearful cry, like some

poor creature meeting its doom. "My God!" The Scotchman sprang to

his feet.

Phil was pale as death. I felt sick at my stomach. For a minute we were too terrified to move. Phil was the first to recover. He ran to the door and flung it open, letting in a gust of angry wind and the thick blackness of night.

"COME on-we're needed," he shouted. and, without waiting, disappeared into

the darkness.

We were hot on his heels, the Scotchman with his fists ready for action, and I with my gun. We could see men running about with lanterns at the furthermost end of the deck. There was a babel of voices only half distinguishable above the wind. Phil was running towards them, apparently unafraid of any danger.

"The fool!" I muttered, as we tore madly

after him.

I shall never forget that scene! Whenever it flashed through my mind, the sweat breaks out on my forehead; the horror stamped itself in my memory for the rest

of my life.

The men were crouched around something lying limply on the deck; their terrorstricken faces showed clearly in the flickering lights from the lanterns. Phil was unharmed, thank God, but he stood there swaving like a drunken man, with his hand held against his heart.

They were silent as we ran up, but I could sense their horror-the atmosphere was rank with it. And then, to make things

more nerve-racking, one miserable creature began sobbing hysterically.

With fear tugging at my heart, I went into their midst and bent down to look at the thing lying on the deck. It was the body of a man, lying face downward, with one arm outstretched and his hands clutched tightly as if he had tried to save himself.

I turned him over gently, but couldn't restrain a low cry of horror. The Portuguese! His face distorted in fear-the whites of his eyes gleaming horribly and his mouth twisted in a diabolical grin. I have never seen the mask of death rest so evilly on a man-there are no words to express the gruesome spectacle he presented. Dead as door nail-I saw that at a glance. But what fearful manner had he met his death? I stood up, but no one said a word "Well?" I asked, in a voice strangely unlike my own-trying to keep my eyes away from the hideousness of the dead man's face.

There was the same awful silence, broken by those maddening sobs.

Then I heard Phil speaking. His voice sounded quiet and still, as if it came from far away.

"God rest his soul!"

Immediately there was pandemonium. The men sprang to their feet in threatening attitudes and began talking incoherently, each one screaming louder than the other. They shook their fists, and then with one mad impulse swept over to where Phil was standing, pale and panic-stricken.

It was the Scotchman who saved him. He sprang in front of him-a great, towering, magnificent figure, looking like some avenging god. They fell back, step by step, snarling at him like a pack of wolves deprived of their meat. There wasn't one of them who dared encounter the brutality of his fists. He turned and looked at Phil over his shoulder.

"Get to your cabin quick as you can," he said curtly.

Phil hesitated. I could see he was suffering with an indescribable anguish.

"I'm no coward!" His head was high as he moved forward to stand alongside his protector. The sheer courage of him! The men were wild-I feared they would lose all control and rend him limb by limb.

"Don't be a fool!" The Scotchman lost no time in idle words. "It's not only youthe men are frantic! They'll be killing each

other. For God's sake!"

Phil left without another murmur. I breathed more freely when he had gone. The Scotchman dropped his menacing attitude and the men seemed less wild.

"Well?" I said again.

THEY all tried to speak at once, but I managed to quiet them and one man related what had happened. According to his story, the tragedy had occurred within the space of a few minutes. They were lolling about the saloon, none of them caring to face the elements outside, for the night was vicious, when the Portuguese went to get some tobacco from his quarters. He had to cross the open deck to get there.

A moment after he left them, they thought they heard a cry for help, and ran out to see what the matter was. They didn't run far !-- and I don't blame them, for there is no place as weird, as full of imagined terrors, as a dimly lighted ship

They could see the Portuguese struggling on the deck. He was fighting, fighting for his life, but the night was so black they couldn't at first distinguish who his assailant was. They started to his assistance, and then stopped, terror-stricken.

THEY had suddenly caught sight of his attacker-not a man, as they had thought, but a creature of unbelievable horror!

Its body gave out a misty phosphores-

haunted-they cursed Phil until I felt more alarmed for his safety than ever, and I would have given anything to have the shores of England in sight. We were far from land of any kind-a fear-ridden ship, encompassed by the swirling black waves and the pitiless stretch of sky that seemed to reflect the sea's own blackness. Until then I had never realized to what great extent a ship at sea must place itself in the hands of God.

I ordered the men off the deck. The Scotchman and myself were left alone, with the dead man at our feet.

"Puir devil!. I wonder what he thought

"Puir devill I wonder what he thought he saw,' the engineer said, gazing down at the cold, distorted face.

"But I scarcely heard him, for now I noticed little dancing lights playing along the deck-a weird, phosphorescent trail leading from the dead sailor to the ship's side.

"Cripes! The Thing was real! These were the footprints of the monster!"

cence. They could see its great tentacles wrapping themselves around the grappling man-its mouth sucking at his throat! For a moment it stopped its attack to look at the cowering men with a pair of wet, shining eves.

They were paralyzed with fear. Not one of them had the power to lift his little finger to help the unfortunate victim. They could only watch with a terrible fascination until the Portuguese cried out in fearful agony and toppled full length on the deck. The monster stood over him for a second. Once more they saw the baleful glare of its horrible eyes-and then it fled to the side of the ship and leaped over-

A ridiculous story, I thought. Impossible! And yet I could not help seeing the men were honest in their belief. They really thought they had seen the Thing, and the unfortunate man had certainly died of fright.

They began telling me the ship was

he saw!" the engineer said, gazing down at the cold, distorted face.

But I scarcely heard him, for now I noticed little dancing lights playing along the deck-a weird, phosphorescent trail leading from the dead man to the ship's side. I called his attention to them and we went over to investigate. With a quick pang of fear I realized they lay exactly where the monster had trod!

Cripes! The Thing was real! These were the footprints of the monster! The feeling I had had of being watched was not imagination on my part-unknown to me the monster had had its awful eyes on me! I'm no coward. Mutiny, storms, ship-

wreck, I had tasted without losing my courage, but this was infinitely more terrible. How can man cope with a creature possessing the powers of the devil! I shuddered in spite of myself and started as the Scotchman put his hand on my arm. He had realized, too. For once I saw him unnerved, and his eyes were dilated with fear as he whispered to me in a hoarse voice, "They weren't lying, Skipper," he said, "I've heard of those things before, but I never thought we'd come across any of them. The devil's out tonight!"

Pulling myself together, I told him to superintend the removal of the body, prior to its burial, and then went back to my cabin. I don't think anyone slept that night! Each minute was a thing of torture to me,

THE weather improved during the night watery beams of the sun come breaking through the clouds the next morning. With the promise of sunshine the men's spirits revived, but mine refused to bubble up. I was crushed with a foreboding of tragedy, my nerves all shot to pieces.

Phil came up to see me during the morning. He looked haggard. Dropping down into a chair, he buried his face in his hands and for a few minutes seemed to lose all sense of himself, When he finally did look up at me, it was with a face drawn in pain-gray, almost lifeless, I recovered full command of myself at the sight of his misery.

"It's ghastly!" he said. "And it's my fault."

I never saw a human being look so completely broken. It almost angered me; it was childish of him to get such ideas in his head-as if it was anybody's fault!

"Don't talk nonsense. You never were a fool, Phil; I know you well enough to credit you with plenty of sense. Be reasonable and try to understand the minds of those superstitious devils. Your fault!for heaven's sake get that out of your head. Why, man," I expostulated, "it's ridiculous to even think of such a thing. Pull yourself together, you can't let anything like this get you!"

But my heart ached for him. I didn't tell him what I knew-I didn't let him see the fear in my own heart. What was the use? The man was ill-I could tell from his face he had been through hell all night. We all had. He sank back in his chair,

apparently exhausted.

"I'm sorry to act in such a stupid way." he replied with a wan smile. "But the thing has completely unnerved me. You are burying him tonight?" "Yes." I said briefly, as if closing the

"Of course I will recite the burial service?"

I looked at the man in amazement. For a moment I wondered if he had gone completely out of his mind-it was the insanest thing I had ever heard of, and yet he was sitting there, quite unaware of my misgivings. To a certain extent he had recovered his composure. I wanted to laugh-the whole situation seemed so incongruous.

I shrugged my shoulders hopelessly, "Are

you crazy?" I asked. He shook his head very decidedly,

"No, Captain, I'm not crazy, I just want to make it a little easier for that poor soul to reach its God-and, after all, I still

regard myself to blame."

I nearly lost patience with him but it was no use arguing, for he could be very pig-headed when he wanted to, and he simply would have his way. He would be tormented for the rest of his life, he said, if he was unable to perform that last act of mercy. So I was forced to give in to him. All the same, I was miserable about the whole affair. Once Pritchard made up his mind to do a thing, no living power on earth could prevent him. I knew what we were coping with.

The sun staved with us for only a short while, At four o'clock it started to get gloomy; two hours later it was thick and murky, the atmosphere unpleasantly heavy.

The Mary Elizabeth pitched uncomfortshe seemed to have no resistance whatsoever. Then it started to rain, a hazy, dismal sort of rain. The night promised to be ugly, for the darkness was impenetrable.

WE were to hold the burial service on deck, where the Portuguese had met his

death.

The Scotchman was in a vile temper. I think he blamed me for allowing Pritchard to conduct the service, which, according to him, was plain suicide-but I was determined to see it through. We went down to Phil's cabin about eight o'clock, and found him sitting there quite calm and collected.

"Ready?" he asked cheerfully, and I nodded, while the Scotchman mumbled something irreverent under his breath-he was

exasperated.

I led the way out on deck, with Phil close at my elbow and the Scotchman following behind, alert for danger, I think he would have died for Phil.

It was a weird scene! The men stand-

ing around, with their lanterns blurred by the rain; the corpse lying on the deck, shrouded with a gleaming white sheet; and Phil, with his head thrown back and his pale white face showing up peculiarly in the darkness, standing alone. He was hatless-standing there quite unafraid-sublime in his faith-unconscious of all else but the thought of helping a soul to find its God. I shall never forget the tremendous strength of that physically frail man.

NOW, when I look back, I wonder if he was a little mad, or a fanatic-for I cannot understand how a man, knowing the acute danger of such an undertaking, could have such perfect poise. You seemed aware only of his presence, all else faded into oblivion-everything was lost before the compelling earnestness of that upright figure. He commanded silence without asking for it; such was his strength of mind.

He began in an impressive voice, making himself heard by all in spite of the fact that the night was thick with innumerable sounds. His words came to me clearly. musically, and I wondered at his faithit seemed to me he had a very clear understanding of his God. When I think of it now, it was phenomenal how easily we

could hear his words.

As he was nearing the end of the service and about to pronounce the words commending the body to the sea, he stopped short-his words stifled in his mouth. He stared with wide-open eyes out to sea and his hands slipped up to his throat as if he were trying to choke a cry. We were all rooted to the spot. I could hear the Scotchman breathing heavily close to my ear.

He stood there, as if carved in stone, absolutely motionless except for his eyes. which seemed to dilate more by the second.

As one man, we turned and looked in the same direction, over the deckside, out to sea. God! I could have screamed! It was horrible! Ghastly! My tongue clave to the roof of my mouth. I could feel my lips parched and the back of my throat swollen -I could scarcely breathe. All else was forgotten. It seemed I lived by myselfalone-with the creeping shadows-the terrifying darkness of the night-and the Thing of horror peering up at me from the swirling blackness of the waves.

I can never forget those eyes-the horror of them has never left me to this day. They were the first thing I was conscious of-great, slimy eyes gloating over us evilly, shining with a loathsome glee and filling us with unspeakable dread-hypnotizing us

into speechlessness.

Its huge, sagging mouth was wide open and dripping with strings of seaweed. We could hear its steady breathing-it seemed I could hear the awful beat of its heart! A wide hole gaped in its face where a nose should have been, making its ugliness appalling-and its breath came out in streams of liquid phosphorescence.

The hideous creature reflected a weird blue light, making itself more clearly seen. Its long, slimy tentacles moved about like so many snakes, twisting restlesslystretching out, then drawing back like a sensitive plant. It sought us out one by one with its terrible eyes-freezing our very souls and numbing us into a state of paralvsis; then it concentrated all its power on The blue light surrounded him; we could see his pale, strained face gleaming in the reflection-even some of the phosphorescence had fastened itself upon him.

If only the creature was unreal-some strange illusion of the dark waters-some phenomenon of electricity, for the night was stormy. If it would only vanish in thin air like a supernatural being! the thing breathed-its body was a thick There was no denying the truth; the creature lived! It was some hideous monstrosity risen from the ocean's bed. I could even smell the odor of its vile body.

FOR one terrible moment I thought Phil was dead where he stood-but then I saw he was swaying lightly on his feet. He was fascinated by the Thing, watching it as a bird might watch a snake, his lips parted in a sort of breathless expectancy. horror had drained out of his face-his eyes were fixed on the monster with a glassy stare, leaving his face devoid of any intelligence.

He swayed giddily, then with mechanical tread started to move forward-slowly! The agony of watching him! God! tried to cry out, to scream, to warn him, but my throat was parched. I couldn't

utter a syllable!

My limbs refused to move. Fear had bound me more securely than any rope or chain-all I could do was to watch with a burning intensity. Watch! How terrible it was to watch! Let me go mad, froth at the mouth, writhe in agony-but let me scream! I couldn't, I was numbed.

He walked on towards the Thing, his

eyes fixed on it intently, seeing nothing else. Slowly, each step seeming to last interminable time! The seconds were hours to us before he had crossed half the deck and none of us had the power to stop him!

Now he was nearly up to the monster, two more paces and he would be close enough to touch it. He hesitated, poised on one foot. His mechanical movements left him. He tried to tear his eyes away from the compelling gaze of the monster; in futtle despair he flung his hands in front of his face! He looked back at us wildly with a distorted face—he struggled horribly with himself, trying to regain control of his numb body. But he was unable to move.

We can I convey to you the agony of watching his tortured movements, each gesture to appare the second of the control of the second of the control of the co

But the monster was too quick for him! Its tentacles shot out with lightning rapidity, catching him securely, wrapping themselves around him with their vise-like

grip. The spell was broken. We let loose like a mob of lunatics and rushed to his aid. Too late! The monster had leaped back into the sea, taking Phil with him, leaving behind only the sound of his last dreadful scream.

We hung over the deck's side, like a lot of gibbering fools, but of course there was nothing to be seen. The dark waves rolled angrily beneath us—a few bubbles—otherwise, the sea had swallowed up its victim

completely. The whole occurrence probably had lasted not more than a minute, but it had seemed an eternity. It was a wonder we didn't go stark, staring mad. It was like waking after a hair-raising nightmare—to find it was a reality! For Phil had succumbed to the monster's hellish powers, and the dead Portuguese still lay on the deck, waiting to be sent to his last resting-place.

That, to me, seemed the most horrible of all. We had excellent weather for the remainder of the trip. The Mary Elizabeth excelled herself and the sea was flooded with sunshine—which was remarkable, for you will remember this happened at Christmas-time. We reached Liverpool with no further disaster.

After my duties were attended to, I went straight to Surrey, where my father lived. He was an old man then, retired from the sea, but wonderfully preserved for his age.

I told him of the tragedy.

He didn't laugh or scoff at my narrative, for my father had too great an understanding of the sea and its mysteries. He listened to me quietly until I had finished my story and then he asked me to go up in the attic with him.

It was an old house, with great rambling staircases, paneled walls with secret passages, and an attic which used to delight me both as a child and a man. Relies of his adventures lay about: wonderfully carved sea-chests, wome-acten with age; and timeworn charts which hung on the discolored walls. But my father seldom invited anyone up there. It was his sanctuary, his treasure room.

He hade me open a dusty oblong box, which to me looked like some old coffin. It was filled with papers; yellow and crinkled they were—old parchments giving out a musty oddr—logs—charts—things belonging to our ancestors, for we have been seafaring men since the reign of Quene Elizabeth. He delved 'down into their midst; and after a methodical search, for he knew the exact place of everything, he drew out an old manuscript.

Smiling to himself, he tucked it under his arm and beckoned me to follow him downstairs. When we were comfortably settled in the library, he opened the old manuscript and began talking.

"MY boy," he began, "I always warned you against christening or having anything to do with a ship by the name of 'Mary Elizabeth."

That was quite true—he had. But I always imagined it to be one of his queer ideas, of which my father had many.

He went on:

"Tve studied these old log-books and manuscripts until I know them by heart. This is the diary of Sir William Richmond, a nobleman of Queen Elizabeth's court and an ancestor of ours. His daughter's name was Mary Elizabeth, She was his idol and, being an sambitious man. he planned a brilliant match for her—but she fell in love with a young explorer and wished to marry him against her father's wishes. Love proved the stronger—and with the help of friends she was smuggled aboard, her lover's ship, which had been named 'Marry Elizabeth' in her honor, and was secretly married by a minister of questionable character.

"Her father found out too late, for already the little vessel had sailed. His love for his child changed to a soul-eating hatred. He pursued them with his own large ships, coming up with the gallant little ship before two days had elapsed. He commanded his daughter to return, but she refused to give in; so the crew of the vessel fought to its last drop of blood.

"When all the men were slaughtered, the young explorer, anxious to save his bride's life, implored her to return to her father, but she refused. Escape was hopeless, so they set fire to their ship and, wrapped in each other's arms, perished in the flames.

"The terrible sight did not soften Sir William—he cursed her, and all named after her, with a terrible curse. The minister was the only survivor. He was picked up after the Mary Elizabeth had gone down

to her fate.

"Mad with rage, Sir William vented all his wrath on the unfortunate survivor. He ordered a raft to be made with a stout pole standing up in the center; and, after having the minister's clothes dipped in oil, he had him tied to the pole, setting a torch to him as they pushed the raft out on the waves. I think, from Sir William's writings, he must have been quite mad; however, the mars death agonies were as halm to his.

insatiable rage. He cursed him again and again before the last agonizing shricks had been silenced by the waves—cursing all ministers who sailed the seas under the name of Mary Elizabeth. This is the most important fact.

After the raft had disappeared, the seas became troubled, the waves upheaved, and great bubbles spouted up to the surface. Described exactly as you have just done, a monster rose up out of the sea, as if in answer to his curse. I won't describe it to you, for you can read it more easily. It is written in old English and parts of it are obliterated—nry eyes aren't as good as they used to be. So you see, my boy, why your narrative did not astonish me. A curse of

the soul never dies!"

I read the manuscript over carefully and without a doubt the monster was of the same species as the one we had encountered in such a tragic way. Had I known before, Phil would never have crossed with me—but at all times Fate is expericious. As for the Portuguese, his death was inevitable—the sudden, overpowering fright at seeing the monster had been too much for him. If you had seen the Thing, you would realize to a fuller extent the terror of its presence—few men could come in close contact with such a being and live to tell the tale.

One more thing, if any of you are interested, next time I go down to Surrey I'll dig out the old manuscript—since my father's death, about thirty years ago, the old house has remained as it was. He left it to me, including the attic and its treasures.

The strange old document might make it easier for you to understand the truth of my story.

Fear - The Cause of a Murder

Ms. D. A. McDONALD, wife of a dairy farmer near Troy, Alabama, was found dead recently beside the York-Butler highway, clad only in a nightgown. She had been shot through the head with a pistol.

For a year or more a rumor has been in circulation in that portion of the State that automobilists traveling over the road at night have been terrified by seeing an apparition. Sunter County officials believe that the woman, walking along the roadside in her sleep, was mistaken for a ghost by a nervous autoist, who fired at her, then fled. Mrs. McDonald, a sleep-walker, was probably on the way to see her four-year-old son, who was passing the night at the home of her brother-in-law about two miles from the McDonald home. A small boy's suit was found beneath her arm.



Phantom

By GRANT HUBBARD

Dell'as beauty stirred the evil heart of the Hindu magician and he swore to possess her. Then the terrible web of black magic closed around her!

Robin Carr fell in love with Della Noone! when he was fourner years old. He first saw her in a little clearing in the woods near her aunt's house, and she woods near her aunt's house, and she was singing and dancing with mistry, intengible figures that seemed to spring out of the head of a Hindu boy who was lying saleep on the ground. Robin could never widerstand that strong vision.

Years later Robin met Detla again at a fraternity dance at Harvard. She was engaged to his roommate and best friend,

Parker Storey.

Robin fell in love with her all over again. That night, after the dance, he could not sleep and he stood for a long time in the shadows in front of the house where she was staying. Suddenly he became aware of two white figures near a window on the second floor. One of them, he thought, was Detla. Suddenly she dropped something and he saw a dark form creeping forward to pick it up. He seized the intruder, discovered it was a girl and received a knife wound in his arm. The girl disappeared. But he managed to hold onto the little bundle that had been dropped from the window-and it turned out to contain a number of stolen iewels!

His discovery caused a commotion and Detla seemed much upset. Detla's roommate swove she had seen a ghost in the room. Detla demanded to be taken home and Robin volunteered to drive her in his car to Lancaster, where she lived.

On the way a white-clad Hindu suddenly appeared on the running-board and Robin lost control of the automobile!

ITH the first crash against the fence, Robin's whole attention fixed itself on the car. He jammed on the brakes and wrenched the steering wheel around, so as to take the descent straight on. The car plunged downward for thirty Then it struck two young saplings, hardly more than bushes, bent them over and straddled them, passing on with diminished speed to come to a stop with a jerk against a huge boulder. Except for those saplings, Robin and Detla would have been killed. As it was, Robin struck the wheel with enough force to knock the breath out of him, and Detla was thrown against the wind-

shield, which fortunately didn't break.

Involuntarily Robin looked around for
the white-garbed Hindu whose sudden appearance on the running-board had caused
all the trouble. There was no sign of
him

"Are you hurt?" he gasped, as soon as returning breath gave him the power to speak.

Detla, thoroughly shaken, pushed herself back onto the seat.

"NO," she said tremulously. "What happened? I—Pm afraid I was asleep." The car lights had gone out, but by the faint gray of the coming dawn, Robin could see that her eyes were big with trouble as if she half suspected what had happened.

He tried to speak quietly and to shield

her from too great a shock.

"That Hindu," he said, "the one Ethel Burpee saw-somehow he must have gotten



on the running-board of the car before we started. I saw him-leaning over you. I thought he was trying to kiss you. Then I lost control of the car and we struck the fence. He was thrown off-maybe killed."

Detla buried her face in her hands and sobbed.

He made an effort to reassure her and asked again if she was hurt.

"No, no, I'm not hurt," she answered miserably. "Oh, if I only knew what to

"Do?" he repeated, speaking as cheerfully as he could. "Why, we aren't in such a bad fix. We're lucky to be alive. All we have to do is to go up the bank and wait on the road for another car. Come, let's get started."

But she continued to sit with covered

face, her shoulders shaking,

"I've tried to fight alone!" she choked, "I've tried so hard. But it doesn't do any good. He keeps coming. Oh, why am I so weak !"

ROBIN looked at her, keenly troubled. It was plain to him that she was badly frightened and hysterical. He, too, realized the danger of their position if the Hindu was armed and had not been badly hurt. He reached into the back of the car and his hand closed around a heavy monkey-wrench, the only available weapon of defense.

"We'd better be getting away from here," he said resolutely. "Come on-you can tell me about everything while we're walking along the road."

She turned her face, removing her hands,

Her eyes were big and pitiful.

"You saw him standing on the runningboard," she said. "You said you saw him." "I saw a Hindu man. How he got there is more than I-"

"It wasn't a man! It was a spirit-the spirit of a magician who wants to steal my soul! My God! He seems to have gotten it, too! Oh, what am I going to do!"

Robin reached over and took one of her hands in his, laying his other hand over it and gripping it firmly.

"I don't understand," he said. "Maybe you'll tell me in a minute. But as for that Hindu, he must have been killed or at least pretty badly hurt. I suppose I ought to

look for him right away." He made a move as if to leave her. But she shuddered and clung convulsively to his hand.

"Don't go away from me!" she cried piteously. "Oh, don't go away from me! He might come back. I couldn't stand itagain!"

"What do you mean?" Robin asked, "The man is probably dead-certainly badly in-

jured. He-"

"Dead? Injured?" she cried hysterically.
"Don't you understand? Won't you believe
what I told you—now! It was a spirit
you saw—Kala Neo's spirit—that Hindu.
That's what I'm fighting. Oh, I'm afraid!
I'm afraid!"

HER hand was quivering and shaking in this. Her words sent a thrill of horror through him. He shook it off, telling himself that all this was overwrought imagination on Detla's part. The crash, coming on top of everything else, had been too much for her nerves. He felt that some kind of action was necessary to lift her out of her morbid fears.

"Come," he said, "we'll get out of here, anyway. Then I want you to tell me about that Hindu—all about him. Will you?"

He slipped out from under the wheel and went quickly around the wrecked car to her side. He found her hands still trembling as he helped her out. Holding one of them in his, he led the way back up the embankment, drawing her gently after him. At the same time he looked from side to side

keenly for the Hindu.

"You needn't look," Della said with a quiver in her voice. "Kala Neo is on the other side of the world. It was only his spirit that you saw. I know I probably sound crazy to you. My aunt thought I was crazy when I went to her for help years ago. She had a doctor, and he talked about neuroses and complexes, and all sorts of things, and then ordered me away to Jamaica for a rest. But Kala Neo followed me there—his spirit—and made me stead things for him at night till I was almost crazy."

She drew her hand from Robin's as they reached the top of the embankment, and turned away, catching her breath with a

"Please—oh, please!" he cried earnestly.
"I didn't mean to seem to doubt you. You
don't seem crazy to me a bit; but—what
you tell me—is so strange. A spirit hitat
comes half-way around the world—and all
that. Are you sure it isn't a real man?
I saw him quite plainly, standing on the
running-board."

Detla turned to face him again.

"Will you let me tell you everything from the beginning?" she asked tremulously. "Somehow—from the first minute of meeting you—I've had the feeling that you might understand. And I do need to have somebody understand and help me. Will you let me tell you while we walk on toward the next town?"

A queer, tingling thrill went through Robin at her words. He felt a kind of swelling within his breast—a mixture of joy

and eagerness to help.

"I wish you would," he said. "I—I felt the same thing—that you were in trouble, and that I—might be able to understand. I hope I can. Anyway I'll try; and I shan't think you crazy."

He heard her draw a deep breath. They faced in the direction of Lancaster and took two or three steps that way. Then

Detla stopped.

"I guess the first thing to prove that I'm not crazy is to insist on searching for Kala Neo's body," she said with a peculiar tightness in her voice. "You're sure you saw him. If we don't find him or any trace of him, you'll be more likely to believe the impossible things I'm going to tell you."

Robin made a faint protest, but was really much relieved, and side by side they made a close search for the Hindu. There was sufficient light to see the marks of the car wheels in the dirt of the embankment, and their own footsteps. But there was no sign of the Hindu, or of any place where he had struck the ground. It gave Robin a creept feeling that he couldn't shake off,

"It's no use," he said at last. "He's not here."

Detla shivered a little.

"That's the terrible part of it," she said.
"He probably is here, right beside us, and
if I fell asleep for even two minutes, he'd
build himself up out of my body till you
could see him. And then he'd start getting
possession of my soul as he always does—
miless you stopped him by waking me up."

The headlights of a car appeared as she spoke. They had climbed back to the high-way. Robin moved as if to stop the passing automobile, but Detla drew him back.

"LET it go by," she said with a catch in her voice. "I—I've got to finish this now—please."

With some misgivings Robin let the car go by. Once more they turned toward Lancaster and began to walk. He could hear Detla breathing long and deeply as if gathering courage. He wondered with strange, terrifying soul experience she was going to unfold to him. But he let her take her own time about beginning. At last

she spoke

"It began when I was a little girl in India. My father was an Englishman, a police commissioner in Bombay. We lived in the little town of Sutra, several miles from the city, because it was supposed to be healthier. I had no children to play with except Bhanah, the son of my goph—my unrse. I wasn't even supposed to play with Bhanah, because the caste system is very strief. But we did play together a little and he was a loval little commode."

"Bhanah?" Robin interrupted. "Was that the little Hindu boy I saw with you in the wood that day—" he checked himself playmates. He made Bhanah lie down under a dhak tree and close his eyes. Then he began to sing a strange song in a low voice—and pretty soon, 'right out of Bhanah's head, came one of those strange figures that you saw! Only to me it wasn't transparent. It was real. That's the way I see them. Other people can't see them at all. You are the first person! I have met who has been able to see them. That's why—last night—when you told about your experience in the wood—I couldn't help believing that you might understand.

"The figure that came out of Bhanah's head was a little girl who fived ten miles away. She was really asleep at home. That

The magicians of the East know many secrets. It is a matter of cold scientific fact that they can go into trances while their spirits apparently leave their bodies. No outsider can explain their uncanny tricks.

For the most part; they are holy men. This, however, is the story of a renegade magician who used his monstrous powers for evil—who exercised a diabolical control over a beautiful American girl.

For those who have understanding minds, there is a wonderful spiritual truth in these pages.

suddenly and then went on with evident hesitation—"that day when I thought I saw you dancing with strange, shimmering, transparent figures?"

"You did see me," Detla answered, with a kind of tense gravity in her voice. "And you saw the figures. They were the spirits of little children who had lived near me in India but who hadr't been allowed to come over to play with me. Our cook, Kala Neo, was a strange man. He saw me trying to play with Bhanah once, but Bhanah was too respectful to take part in any real gaine. Kala Neo seemed to understand. Always he looked at me with a strange light in his eyes. He frightened

"He said he would try to find me some

was why her spirit was free to come. She tatked with me and played with me till somebody at home woke her. Then she just melted away in the air. I was too little to be frightened, and Neela Ki was such a sweet, dear little girl that I could only be happy. Kala Neo watched us to make sure that nobody interrupted us. After that he often had Bhanah go to sleep under the dhad tree, and when the spirit children came, he told them that they must always sleep at that hour in the afternoon, if they could manage it, so that they would be free to come and olav with me.

"After a while he taught me how to call them myself, but almost always he used to siand at the entrance of the garden and watch. When it was time for him to go Bhanah and the little children would fade

away out of sight. "Kala Neo's eyes frightened me always. They were so black and glittering. But I never came to be really afraid of him till one night when I was asleep. Right in the middle of my sleep I heard the song that we used to sing to call the children. I woke and my spirit seemed to leave my body and the next second I was in Kala Neo's but, He was sitting on the edge of his bed, but dressed just as usual. His eyes glittered. But, strange to say, this time I wasn't afraid of them. They fascinated me, I thought they were beautiful.

back into the kitchen, he would wake

"HIS wife was lying asleep on the other cot. I didn't know it then, but I know now that he had built up my spirit body out of her just as he had built up the spirit bodies of my playmates out of Bhanah's body. I was excited and thrilled with the

adventure.

"Kala Neo told me that he was a Mahnee Raha, which means a Master Spirit, and that I must obey him in everything. If I did so, he said, he would show me many wonderful things and make me very happy, But if I disobeyed him, he would make me very sorry.

"I wanted to see the wonderful things, I remembered how happy he had already made me by getting those playmates for me. So I promised that I would always do just what he told me to. You don't know how I have regretted that promise since then. It seems that, having made the promise in spirit form, I have to keep it when I am in spirit form. I can't break it. No matter what resolutions I make when I am myself, as I am now, the minute Kala Neo pulls my spirit out of my sleeping body, it obeys

"That first night Kala Neo did show me wonderful things. But first he lay down on his bed and went quickly to sleep. The next minute his spirit took form just like himself, coming out of his wife's head, Then his spirit and I-that is, the spirit part of me-walked right through the wall of his hut as if it hadn't been there. We floated through the air down over the jungle. Every once in a while we stopped and he would show me a jungle creature engaged in its hunting, or perhaps eating its horrid meal of newly killed flesh. Kala Neo made me go very close to the animals, though they always saw us and snarled angrily. He laughed when I was afraid, and told me that nothing could hurt us-that only our bodies could be hurt, and they were safe in our beds.

"Then he took me into the city of Bombay and showed me strange sights. He took me into places where they were having feasts, with nautch dancers and singers entertaining. He took me into dens where men were lying around in bunk's and all over the floor, smoking opium. He took me into other terrible places that I don't want to describe to you, though at the time I didn't know quite how awful they were.

He even took me to a place where a man was with a woman, and another man came sneaking in with a knife to kill them. screamed and the two heard me and sprang up. But the other man killed them bothright before my eyes! Oh, it was terrible, but Kala Neo only laughed as if he enjoyed

it, and took me away.

"After a while I felt myself fade out into nothingness, and the next second there I was in my own bed at home, with my avah bending over me and talking softly about a bad dream. I whimpered and cried and clung to her, till finally she lay down beside me and I went to sleep.

"The next day when I saw Kala Neo, I wanted to run away and hide, but his eyes stopped me. He didn't tell me that I must keep silent about what had happened in the night-not in words-but I knew it, and I never spoke about it. I was afraid.

"After that, night after night Kala Neo called my spirit out of my body and took me places. Always we saw amazing things and dreadful things, and always the nightmare broke with my nurse at my bedside, shaking She said I had been dreaming, and I never tried to tell her differently. But I used to try not to go to sleep because I was afraid of the terrible journeys with Kala Neo. Yet I often purposely went back over those journeys in my mind and got strange thrills out of them. There was a fascination about them.

"KALA NEO'S power over me came to be greater all the time. He even taught me to steal. I couldn't do this in my spirit form, but he would come to me in his spirit form and command me, and then I would get up out of bed and go to my mother's room and take her jewels, if she had left them lying out-or money from my father's pocket. Whatever I took, I gave to Kala Neo. I felt desperate afterward, and fought against Kala Neo's power, Finally, one day, I got up my courage and sobbed

out the whole story to my mother.

looked worried and evidently thought I was sick, for she put me to bed and talked soothingly to me and tried to make me believe that it was all a dream. But when my father came home, he looked serious. He said that Hindus could do queer things, and he searched Kala Neo's quarters for the stolen things. He found nothing, but he sent for Kala Neo and asked him many harsh questions.

"KALA NEO denied everything. My father then called Bhanah, who cor-

roborated my story to the extent of saving that he often had gone to sleep in the afternoon at Kala Neo's orders, and at mine, too, and that he had been told by me that Kala Neo made little children come out of his (Bhanah's) head for me to play with. He had never seen the children, however, as he was always asleen.

"Father talked to me again and I told him the names of the children. He had his horse saddled then, and he went to search for those children in the neighbor-

ing villages,"

Here Detla's voice broke a little and she passed a hand across her eyes. She was evidently under the stress of some terrible

"He never came back," she said finally, "His horse came home without him. Two days later his body was found at the foot of a cliff.

"The deputy police commissioner said he must have been thrown by his horse. But I-since then I have come to be sure that Kala Neo had something to do with it.

"We left India for America soon after that; but not before Kala Neo had come to me in his spirit form and warned me to keep silent about him. He repeated that he was a Mahnee Raha and said that when I grew up I was to be one of his brides. After that he appeared to me no more in his spirit form while we were in India. I think he was afraid I would talk again, in spite of his threats.

"We took Bhanah with us, I wanted him, He was an orphan, and gave me a worshipful loyalty that made him eager to come

with us.

"On board the ship, during the long voyage, I was lonesome and, having got rid of my fear of Kala Neo, I once more tried to use the power he had given me.

I had Bhanah go to sleep and then called for those little playmates of mine in India. I had learned by this time that it was no use to call them unless they were asleen. I had to try many times before I found the right time of day-for I knew nothing about the differences in time resulting from our traveling westward. At last, when we were in the middle of the Atlantic, all of my little Hindu friends came to me at a single calling. I had a lovely time, talking and playing with them-for, when they came, they seemed perfectly real to me.

"Of course I called them the next day. But this time my mother surprised me in our cabin, playing with them. She could not see them. But she heard me talking to them, and asked me what I was doing, tried to tell her and to show her these little playmates, but she treated me as a sick person, waked Bhanah and out me to bed."

Once more Detla stopped, evidently overcome with emotion. Then she went on, forcing her voice to remain steady.

"That night my mother disappeared, Nobody saw the accident, but a piece from her veil was found clinging to the steamer rail, and it was thought that she had become dizzy while looking over the side, and toppled over. But I am certain now that it was Kala Neo's doing and that it was my fault for having called the spirits of my little friends. I probably called him at the same time without knowing it. I know that he came to me that very night and sat on my bunk while he told me more and more of his masterful plans for our future, reminding me that I was going to help him become rich, and that, when I was grown up. I was to become his bride.

'HE ordered me to keep silent about him always, and to consider myself already as his pledged wife. He said he would come to me in his own person when I was twenty years old, to marry me, and that in the meantime his spirit would come often and that I would do whatever his spirit told me

"I didn't know about my mother's death till morning. Then I was so hysterical with grief that I forgot all about Kala Neo. "Since that time I have never been able

to free myself from Kala Neo's power, I never sleep comfortably, for fear that he will appear to me or that he will call my spirit out of my body and take me on some of those terrible excursions that he seems to love. Oh, I can't tell you the awfulness of what he makes me see. I don't believe there is any form of sin or crime that Kala Neo has not forced me to witness. And the most terrible part is that the thing works like a drug. It has begun to have a horrible fascination for me. I no longer resist. I look where Kala Neo tells me to look, and I find myself beginning to take the same morbid pleasure in crime and degeneracy that he takes. And then in the morning—th, I am so a shamself! I am so a shamself! He's the master of my soul and he's making a horrible thing out of it!"

SHE covered her face with her hands and remained silent for perhaps half a minute, while Robin pitied her from the depths of his heart. Finally he said gently:

"What happened tonight? I was under your window. I—I had taken a long walk and—for some reason—I had come back past the fraternity house. I thought I saw you at your window. It seemed to me that there was a white figure beside you."

Detla half moaned.
"There was!" here was!" she cried. "It
was Kala Neo. His spirit had materialized
from the body of someone in the house,
perhaps the girl who shared the room with
me. He made me tell him which girls had
worn jewelry and where they slept. Then
he made me, in my own bodily form, go into
those rooms and steal the things. Then
he made me go to the window and throw
them out, wrapped up in the handkerchief
of one of the girls. He had somebody
crouching down below, waiting. That is
the way he has always done when I have
stolen things for him. I have never gotten
near enough to see the person."

"It was a girl," Robin cried—"a girl with a knife. She may have been a Hindu. Her face was very dark. I saw her pick up the handkerchief of jewels. I watched her creep out of the yard. Then I grabbed her."

"She cut you with her knife!" Detla cried with sudden concern. "Was it a bad wound?"

Robin pulled up his sleeve. The cut was clotted over with blood. Detla gave a little cry of horror and compassion. Robin hastily dropped the sleeve again.

"It's nothing," he said. "But it ought to be pretty good evidence to me that this business isn't just imagination."

"You believe I'm not crazy then?" Detla asked with the piteousness of a little child. "Haven't I seen this Hindu spirit, too?" Robin asked quietly. "And didn't I see the little Hindu children come out of that boy's head to play with you in the woods long ago? If you're crazy, I am, too. The difficult thing is to know how to act about it. You've got to be freed from that man's influence."

"What can I do?" Detla asked. "Oh, you don't know how I've tried to break away." "Have you told Parker about it?" Robin asked.

There was a silence. Then: "No."
"Don't you think you ought to?"

"I'm afraid to. I ought not to have told you. I wouldn't have; only—only—you had seen—so much. You seemed—to understand; and I—I need somebody who understands. But I ought not to have told you." "Why not?"

"Don't you see—Kala Neo—will try to kill you—as he killed my father and my

kill you—as he killed my father and my mother? Oh, I ought not—"
"Nonsense," Robin interrupted. "He can't

hurt me. I don't ride horseback. I'm not on board a ship. I know what he is, and I'm not afraid of him. Ghosts can't stab or shoot. They can only frighten. That won't work with me. If I could only lay my hands on the man himself! I'd find a precipice for him!" He gritted his teeth.

"What good would that do?" Della asked.
"It's his spirit that comes to me. If you killed his body, his spirit would be all the more free. No, you can't help me. Or, rather, you have already helped me. It has helped to tell you and to have you understand. But you must do nothing—say nothing. If you try to interfere with Kala Noo's plans, he will surely—"

"He'll do nothing." Robin said deliberately. "But I think you should tell Parker.
He—might understand—if I explain
what I have seen, too. Don't you see? Besides, somebody else ought to know and
join forces with us. If, by any chance, that
devil, Kala Neo, should manage to get me
out of the way—he won't, but if he should—
there ought to be somebody else, who—"

"BHANAH knows," Detla said. "He understands, too, but he—he has already gone—to India—hunting for Kala Neo himself."

"Bhanah? Oh, yes, the little Hindu boy. He is still loyal, then?"

"Bhanah—loyal? He thinks of nothing

but my good. He acts as if I were a queen in trouble and he my slave. When my aunt died two years ago, she left him a small legacy. She was putting him through college. He left college and began to study hypnotism and spiritism and yogi-ism. Six months ago he came to me and told me that he was going to India to find Kala Neo before it was too late."

"Too late?" Robin asked. "What did he

mean by that?"

DETLA hesitated, When she spoke, her

voice seemed stifled. "Tomorrow-no, it's today now-is my twentieth birthday," she said. "Kala Neo has said again and again that on that day

he is coming in person to make me his bride." "You don't believe that he'd really dare

"Kala Neo would dare to do anything." "But he couldn't carry you off, out of

your own house-not in this country." A faint, misty dawn had come as they walked. Looking at Detla now, Robin saw

that she was biting her lower lip as if to keep control of herself. Her face was tense with distress.

"What is it?" he cried. "You believe he could do it?"

She answered in a voice that was husky

with the tightness of her throat: "He would not try to carry me off. I know now. The bride of a Mahnee Raha is never known as his bride. She lives her life like any other. But when he chooses-" She broke off, covering her face with her hands and swinging away from him, drawing great, terrifying, gasp-

ing breaths. Startled as he was and dazed for a moment by her sudden breakdown, Robin stared at her wonderingly. Then he realized the meaning of her uncompleted sentence.

"Detla," he said with a queer throatiness in his voice that he could not get rid of, "Detla, surely you know-nothing like that could happen to you! It couldn't!"

"Oh, I'm afraid, I'm afraid," she moaned. "When I'm asleep, he does what he pleases Perhaps when he with my spirit.

chooses---"

"Detla, he'll never get the chance. Stop worrying. I'll-we'll protect you. Parker and I will get hold of this fiend. We'll make him sick of his job. Don't be afraid any more!"

There was something so strong, so dynamic, so full of conviction, in his voice that his message could not help but carry across to Detla.

She straightened her shoulders, threw back her head and turned to face him, her cheeks pale but her eyes brilliant.

"Thank you for that," she said earnestly.

"I've got my courage back. I'm ready to fight some more." For a minute the two looked into each

other's eyes, and Robin thought that he had never seen eyes of such a wonderfül spiritual beauty. More than that, it seemed to him that in that moment a poignant if unworded message came from the girl's brave spirit to his-a message of understanding and of

The spell was broken by the appearance of a car coming their way. Robin signaled it. The driver stopped. He was going straight through Lancaster and would be glad to take them. A few seconds later

they were on their way. They walked the half mile from the

main road up to the old Powers mansion, now Detla's own property, almost in silence. The great house looked chilly and forbidding in the stillness of the morning. Detla opened the front door with her latchkey and then rang for the housekeeper. She explained that she had felt indisposed after the dance and that Robin had brought her home. A puzzled light in the elderly woman's eyes indicated that she wondered why one young man should drive her mistress to a dance seventy miles away and another should bring her back. But she said nothing, merely shutting her lips tightly.

ETLA excused herself to go and change DETLA excused her something more her evening frock for something more suitable, at the same time instructing Mrs. Reynolds to take Robin to one of the guest rooms. When he was alone, he stared with consternation at his dress-suited image in the mirror, then gave a short, grim laugh, pulled off his coat and started washing up. The gash on his forearm required some attention. He was just going to wash it when there came a tap at his door. He opened it to find Detla standing there, bandages and iodine bottle in hand

"I want to fix that knife cut," she said. "Will you let me come in? I'd rather not have Mrs. Reynolds know about it, We

can't tell her the whole story."

He let her in and shut the door. She led him to the little bathroom and gently but thoroughly cleansed the cut. He looked down at her small, well-shaped head as she bent over his hand, and it was all he could do to keep from laying his other hand on the bronze-gold hair. The touch of her hands on his arm set his whole body to tingling. He knew he was in love with her-knew it more with each breath that he drew. It was hard to stand there, fairly quivering with the emotion that was in him, and at the same time to know that she was engaged to his best friend.

HE fortified his own will by talking about plans for her protection.

"I want you to let me send for Parker," he said. "He'll be worried when he hears about last night-and more so, when he hears about the finding of my car on the side of the embankment. Besides, we need him, and we owe him the truth.'

She turned her face up to his with a look in her eyes that made him think of a

hunted creature.

"I suppose we do owe it to him," she said. "But, oh, you don't know how I dread telling him! I know he won't understand. He'll think I'm crazy. It will upset him terribly."

"Of course it will upset him. But he won't think you crazy-not after I've talked with him. Where is your telephone?"

"It's in the little sitting room off the hall, on the left as you go down. If you talk quietly there's no need of Mrs. Reynolds hearing you."

finished her bandaging, rose, her eyes still troubled, but full of

courage.

After she had left, he put on his swallowtail coat with a grimace of resignation and went downstairs. He found the telephone and lifted the receiver. As he did so, there came a click and a rattle. Almost immediately he heard a man's voice with a peculiar foreign intonation:

"I wish to speak with Miss Noone." A thrill went through Robin, leaving him tense. His mind had flown back to that time when he had seen the spirit forms in the woods and listened to their speech and to the conversation of Detla with the Hindu boy, Bhanah. Here was that same foreign manner of speech! Could this be the Hindu whom she dreaded-Kala Neo? Tingling with excitement, he answered as impersonally as he could.

"Miss Noone has not come down yet. Can I take a message?"

"No. I will ring her again." The voice was even and calm, almost metallic.

"Who shall I say called?" Robin asked. But before he could receive any answer, there came from above a piercing scream

of horror, followed by his name, "Robin! Robin!" He slammed down the receiver and

dashed from the room. He was up the stairs with a rush, but didn't know which was Detla's room. He called her name, There was no answer, but he could distinguish the muffled sounds of a struggle!

He sprang to the nearest door and flung it open. The room was empty.

But now, across the hall, from a door behind him, came that deadened sound of struggle. He turned and hurled himself against the door.

It was locked.

"Detla!" he called.

A horrible inarticulate gurgle was the only answer.

He lunged with all his force against the door, but it did not give. He looked about for some weapon with which to batter it down, but there was none. He lifted his foot and sent his heel crashing against the keyhole.

IDITHIN the room came the soft, quick padding of feet. There was no longer even the inarticulate gurgle from Detla. He lifted his foot once more and kicked with all his force. The door burst open.

Opposite the doorway Detla lay on her back across her bed. She was clothed only in her delicate silk under-things. Her head hung down over the edge of the bed, facing him upside down.

He ran to her and knelt to lift her head

back onto the bed.

The next instant a silken scarf whipped down past his eyes, circled his throat and tightened like a snake! A knee was placed in the middle of his back.

He threw up his hands and tried to claw away the scarf. His efforts were futile.

He felt consciousness leaving him. thought of Detla and made a superhuman effort.

Robin is in the grip of the fiend! Can he save Detla from the magician's evil hands? Even now a terrible fate awaits her in the Hindu's secret lair in the Oriental quarter of Boston! Strange events-love-madness-hypnotic terrors-weird Oriental mysteries-lie ahead! Don't miss the March issue of GHOST STORIES-on all news stands February 23rd.

Stolen by Spirits

This girl's weird trances startled the world of science. The villagers said that ghosts controlled her unconscious body! What was the explanation?

By GORDON HILLMAN

HIS is a truthful report of the astounding and still unsolved case of the Ghost Girl, one of the strangest mysteries in the history of psychic phenomena.

The scene is Watseka, Illinois, a small citime is 1877 and several years immediately thereafter. The investigators concerned were the various American psychic societies and that Sherlock Holmes of the supernatural, the most famous psychic detective of his day, Dotor Richard Hodgson.

On January 11th, 1827, a fourteen-yearold girl, Lurrancy Vennum, sat sewing at the window of her Watseka home. All the evidence goes to show that Lurrancy was a very ordinary child. Neither she nor her parents had heard much of psychic happenings and, if they had, would have been most ardent disbelievers.

The Vennuns were descendants of an old American family. Their ancestors had fought in the Revolution and they claimed kinship with George Washington and Light-Horse Harry Lee. They were prominent in Illinois without particularly going out of their way to be. In short, they were typical Americans of the day.

On this winter afternoon Lurrancy was placidly sewing. Without any warning at all, without even a startled cry, she suddenly fell unconscious to the floor and lay for A TRUE Account of a Famous Mystery



five hours afterward in a state of coma.

She recovered and seemed none the worse for her experience. But on the following day the same thing happened. This time the apparently insensible girl talked. She told her startled parents and the doctor that she was in the company of numerous "spirits" and that among them was her brother who had died when she was three years old.

DESPITE the fact that she must have had a very hazy memory of his existence, she described his appearance fully and accurately.

To her parents' utter horror these trancelike states continued for an entire year. The family doctor called them "fits" and describes them as lasting from one to eight hours and occurring from three to twelve times a day.

Both Watseka and Chicago physicians treated her case without success, and in January, 1878, her troubled parents decided that Lurrancy was quite mad and planned

to put her in an insane asylum.

At this juncture Asa B. Roff, a prominent Watseka business man, stepped in. seemed that his daughter, Mary, long stnce dead, had been subject to the same seizures, and Mr. Roff declared they were a form of

"spirit infestation." He begged Mr. Vennum not to send his daughter to an insane asylum and he summoned Doctor Winchester Stevens, a famous physician from Janesville, Wisconsin. Now Doctor Stevens was not only a man of medicine but a sort of amateur psychic investigator as well. He had examined half the haunted houses in Wisconsin and pronounced them frauds. He had unmasked a good many charlatans at various times and he hurried to Watseka at once, keen to disclose the latest "fraud."

On January 31st, he called at the Vennum home.

"I found the girl," he says, "sitting near a stove in a common chair, her hands under her chin, feet curled up on the chair, look-

ing in every way like an old hag.

"She called her father 'Old Black Dick' and her mother 'Old Granny,' and she said she was Katrina Hogan, an old German immigrant, who had recently died. For the moment she did look like an old German woman instead of a young girl, and though Lurrancy Vennum knew no language except English, while under what we will call 'the spell' she talked pure German." (In-

vestigation revealed the fact that Katrina Hogan, German immigrant, who had married an Irishman, had died some days previous on an Ohio farm. None of the Vennum family had ever heard of her exis-

The next day, while Doctor Stevens was still in attendance and very vigorously sniffing about for some hint of fraud: Lurrancy announced that she was Willie Canning, a boy in the neighborhood who had died before she was born. Doctor Stevens attests that her voice changed to that of a boy and was recognized as Willie's by his terrified parents.

That night she passed into a state of cataleptic rigidity and remained in a semicoma for four days. There was no doubt as to the absolute genuineness of the coma. a score of physicians testified to that.

On the fourth morning she awoke as calmly as from a long sleep, gazed about her in a startled way and demanded to be taken home at once.

When told that she was at home, she refused to recognize her father or mother and declared that she was Mary Roff and

that she wanted her father.

Mary Roff had died thirteen years before, while Lurrancy Vennum had been an infant just learning to walk. It is, of course, inconceivable that Lurrancy could have had any memory of the Roff child. and prior to Mr. Roff's interest in the Ghost Girl's case the families had not even known each other or lived in the same neighborhood.

Mr. Roff came running to the Vennum home and the Ghost Girl greeted him ecstatically. She wanted to be taken away from "these strange people" (i. e., her parents) and she babbled to him of past events in Mary Roff's life-events that were entirely unknown to anyone save the Roff family.

M RS. ROFF and her surviving daughter, Minerva, were hurriedly summoned and as the Ghost Girl looked out of the window, she saw them coming.

"Here comes my ma and Nervie!" she cried, and Doctor Stevens began to lose his confidence that the whole affair was a fraud. "Nervie" was a nickname that only Mary Roff had ever used for her sister and it was preposterous that Lurrancy Vennum should know it.

There was nothing to do but take the little girl to the Roff home, and on the way there another astounding incident happened. When they arrived in the center of the town the Ghost Girl abrupily tried to enter a certain house. It was the house in which the Roffs had lived up to 1865—the house where Mary Roff had died and from which they had moved immediately after her death.

"WHY, I know I live there!" cried the Ghost Girl, and it was with difficulty that they persuaded her to accompany them to their new home.

Once there, however, she settled down happily enough and identified scores of family objects known only to Mary Roff, dead thirteen years before. Doctor Stevens began to lose more and more of his doubts.

The little girl had no more "fits" or cataleptic seizures and seemed a normal child in all but two particulars. She had the power of prophesying future events and on various occasions she said she was "Mary Roff returned to earth in a favored

body." Old acquaintances of Mary's, whom Lurrancy Vennum had never known and in several cases never seen, were greeted as though she had left them only the day before. Her fame began for spread through Illinois, and Chicago savants and newsnancemen came down to see the Ghost Girl.

All sorts of tests were made to detect any possible fraud, though by now Doctor Stevens and everyone else in Watseka believed implicitly in the "spirit infestation."

One day when the little girl was playing in the yard, Mr. Roff suggested to his wife that she bring down a certain velvet hat that Mary Roff had worn the last year of her life.

Mrs. Roff did so and called the child in. The Ghost Girl recognized it immediately and asked, "Have you my box of letters also?"

The Roffs had forgotten all about the box but they rummaged around and found it. Whereupon the Ghost Girl cried, "Oh, Ma, here is a collar I tatted. Ma, why didn't you show me my letters and things before?"

She then proceeded about the house and picked out and identified relics dating back long before Lurrancy Vennum was born.

More and more she seemed to have developed the faculty of second sight. One evening she declared that "her" (i. e., Mary Roff's) brother Frank would be ill before morning.

At midnight Frank fell ill with pneumonia.

"Go next door and get Doctor Stevens,"

"Go next door and get Doctor Stever the Ghost Girl told Mr. Roff.

Now Mr. Roff knew that Doctor Stevens was not in Watseka at all, let alone next door, but after a good many protests he did go to the neighbor's house.

To his surprise he found that Doctor Stevens had just arrived there from Janesville on a surprise visit. No one had known of the projected trip save the Doctor himself.

Doctor Stevens was both astounded and pleased. He saved Frank Roff's life and then proceeded to sit down and write an account of the Ghost Girl for the Religio

men proceeded to sit down and write an account of the Ghost Girl for the Religio-magazine of the time.

The article can still be seen in the issues Philosophical Journal, the leading psychic

Philosophical Journal, the leading psychic for August 3rd and 10th, 1878, and is the only scientific account of such a case in the United States, though there have been similar instances of supernatural possession of living persons in Germany and France. Meanwhile strange things were happen-

and changed, the strange times were appearance to the Ghost Girl. After three months of being Mary Roff, she suffered another cataleptic seizure. For a day she became Lurrancy Vennum again. Her voice was Lurrancy instead of Mary's, her face had changed, she did not recognize the Roffs and demanded to be taken 'home."

THAT night there was another seizure. Her voice changed back, her face altered. She was Mary Roff.

For months, as Doctor Stevens and newspapermen watched her every move, it became apparent that a great unseen struggle was taking place within the child. The seizures occurred with great frequency; out of one she would emerge as Lurrancy, out of another as Mary Roff. The townspeople grew frantic with excitement and a certain fear.

Savants wrote articles denouncing Lurrancy as a fraud. Other savants hurried to Watseka from all over the country, observed the remarkable phenomena and made sworn statements as to the "spirit infestation" of the child. Medical and psychic societies observed the case.

By the end of the year it seemed that the long-dead Mary Roff had lost in the struggle for the possession of the Ghost Girl. The child had definitely resumed her existence as Lurrancy Vennum. She no longer remembered Mary's parents or the friends of the Roff family or the household articles she had formerly identified. So the Roff family regretfully sent her back to the Vennums, and all was peaceful

and normal in Watseka.

Far away in Europe, Doctor Richard Hodgson, "psychic sleuth," scoffer at the supernatural, exposer of Eusapia Palladino and Madame Blavatsky, had heard of the astounding phenomenon of the Ghost Girl. He hurried to Watseka, fired with the ambition to detect another "fraud."

Luckily for science, the placid, rather plain Lurrancy Vennum was again "possessed" by Mary Roff shortly after his arrival. For a week she literally became Mary and Doctor Hodgson had a matchless

opportunity for observation.

He found out that before this last singular manifestation Lurrancy had seen "shadowy people in my room last night, They called 'Rancy! Rancy!' and I felt their cold breath on my face."

Doctor Hodgson was the most famous investigator of the century, He interviewed everyone connected with the case: he observed "Mary Roff's" gradual return into Lurrancy Vennum; he probed the affair from all angles.

His report sums up the evidence as fol-

lows:

"This case is unique among the records of supernatural occurrences. All theories of fraud or of dual or multiple human personality are absolutely imbossible."

It is important to note that until the day of her death Lurrancy Vennum, even after she was grown up and married, suffered frequent returns of the spirit of Mary Roff.

SKEPTICS will say that while such supernatural happenings could and doubtless did occur in the Nineteenth Century, they would be impossible in the highly sophisticated life of today. There are, they allege, "no ghosts in Illinois in the Twentieth Cen-

Since the most unlikely place for ghostly phenomena in Illinois is Chicago, it will pay to examine the records there.

In 1912 J. Denterlander, owner of a house at 3375 South Oakley Avenue, appealed to the City Tax Commission. He said that he could not let the house because it was haunted. A young woman had died there under mysterious circumstancesprobably murdered-and since then every tenant had not only been terrified by moans and cries but had "seen" the ghost. The next day after the appearance of the apparition, the tenants generally fled. The Commission investigated the house

and took depositions. Some of its members viewed the house by night and returned in an extremely shaky condition. In the end, because the property was "haunted," the tax assessment was lowered from \$12,000 to \$8,000. The City of Chicago had of-

ficially recognized a "ghost!"

Prize Winners for the Month

The awards to readers for opinions of GHOST STORIES, issue of October, 1928, went to:

1st award of \$10

2nd award of \$5

3rd award of \$3

Doctor Joseph Rohr 1043 Faile Street New York City

Miss Helen Bodman 720 Clifton Avenue Newark, New Jersey

Mrs. L. R. McDaniel 136 Merchants Exchange St. Louis, Missouri

Someone will collect the awards for opinions on this issue. Why not YOU?

The Kiss in the Dark

A true story of a strange warning that saved eight lives

E slept soundly that night. We were a happy family, for all of us were well and not

Вч ROSE BURON

one was then missing from the shelter of the rooftree. My two eldest sons slept in the bedroom at the far end of the upstairs hallway, and my two daughters occupied the middle room, sharing it with the little boy who had been the baby for so long and who slumbered cozily in his cot near them. My husband and I were sleeping in the front room, and our new baby was snuggled

between us. How calmly we slept, while danger crept upon us! Not one of us felt the shadow of impending tragedy. We lived in a quiet

little town and it was hardly necessary even to lock the doors.

Some time after midnight I awakened partially and felt to see if my baby was all safe and well. Then I dropped off to sleep

How much time passed, I do not knowbut suddenly I heard someone whisper soft-

ly into my ear: "Get up-quick!" I felt too sleepy to move and dropped into unconsciousness again. I do not know how many times the words were repeated

but I gradually became aware that they were being said over and over. Then I felt a soft kiss and heard the words again. Still I could not arouse

myself enough to get up. Suddenly I realized that a man's lips

were pressed closely against my cheek. I could feel his beard plainly.

I put out my hand-and touched the wall

near my face!

As the kind voice spoke again, I sat up in bed, trying hard to get my eyes open. The room was dark and silent, and everything seemed to be quite normal. I decided that I had been dreaming and fell back on the pillow again.

Then, all at once, I heard the voice say sternly: "Get out of bed!" There could be

no mistake about it this time.

I got up and stood sleepily at the foot of the bed, wondering why I should have to get up at all.

Some power propelled me

toward the open door leading into the hall. I went out, still only half awake, and felt a kindly hand on my shoulder that kept me moving down the hall.

Then I saw what I had not noticed before. There was a bright light in the

room where the boys slept!

Startled by it, I went quickly to the room. Standing on the threshold, I saw that one of the boys had been studying his lessons in bed and had dropped asleep without turning off the large student lamp on the stand near-by. The alarm clock ticked noisily away, the hands pointing to a quarter to three.

AS I stood watching him, my son threw his arm out over the table, knocking the lamp over. I leaped forward, just in time to keep it from crashing to the floor!

He was dreaming of some work he wanted to do, he told me, when I awakened him. He was greatly surprised to see me, saying that he must have just dropped off to sleep.

I showed him the clock and he was both

startled and ashamed,

"And I went to sleep and left it burning all this time!" he said in a frightened voice, I soothed him and told him how I had been 'forced to get up. We called the others to tell them about it, and we had a real thanksgiving there at three in the

It is highly improbable that any of us would have been left alive to tell the story, if I had not been awakened just in timefor the fire would have trapped us all be-

fore we could have escaped. As we talked over the narrow escape

which had been ours. I knew for a certainty who it was that saved us.

My dear uncle, the brother of my mother, had had the habit of waking me with a kiss when I was a tiny child. He had worn a soft, full beard with which he used to

tease me as long as he lived. I hope that he was able to look deep into our grateful hearts that night when he came back to save the lives of eight of us

99

The Ghost of

Bu LUON MEARSON

OHN CUSTOR was mysteriously murdered after a séance in a booth at Coney Island. His body was found by his son Frank and Celeste the Gypsy. The tipping table, which earlier in the evening had spelled out a warning for Custor, way on tob of the dead man.

The strange manifestations that followed were witnessed by Long Tom the midget. Sadie the snake-charmer, and Celeste and Frank. Weird screams sounded through the room-and the table disabbeared! Celeste's bed-ridden mother, who had not walked a step for ten years, appeared in the doorway, calling, "Who has done this thing?

An instant later they found her in bed, tranquilly sleeping.

The screams served to summon a boliceman, who accused Frank Custor of committing the murder. Before Frank could be taken to the police station, however, Sadie turned loose three of her trained snakes and while they were diverting the attention of the cop, Frank escaped. He drove swiftly to Manhattan and abandoned his car near Times Square. Then, quided by some supernatural force, he rode downtown on the Third Avenue elevated. The mysterious force led him to a tumble-down tenement house on one of the darkest streets on the East Side. A grotesque old man, who had obviously been waiting for him, met him at the door and conducted him into what was apparently an antique shop.

The first thing that Frank's eyes fell upon was the table that he had last seen in the

booth at Conev Island!

OR a moment or two Frank stared about him in amazement. What place was this he had walked into? Who was this little old man with the dried-up skin and the piercing eyes which seemed to see more than eyes should be able to see? What possible con-



nection could this man have with the murder of his father? And why should anyone have wanted to kill his father?

These questions coursed through his fevered brain as he stood looking at the old man and at the table which he believed had killed his father. The old man stood the scrutiny with an indifference that was actually uncanny. It was exactly as though he were sitting alone in his musty shop,

The cold, clammy fingers of fear clutched at Frank's heart and forced him into dazed speech.

"Who are you, old man?" he burst out,

staring wildly at the seated figure before The shopkeeper sat wrapped in a silence

that seemed to place him many miles and many years away. There was no answer, and Frank was impelled to speak again,

the Sideshow



Frank Custor holds an uncanny séance with the talking table—and learns the ghastly secret of his father's murderer!

"Who are you? What are you doing here?"

The old man roused himself and looked quietly at Frank before answering—and in his eyes there was a light that Frank had never seen before

"Who am I?" He seemed to lapse into a reverie again, as though the words

had aroused old memories—thoughts that had nothing to do with the young man who stood in such bewilderment before him.

"Who am I?" he repeated. "Does it matter to you?"
"It does," said Frank. "Speak, in the

name of God!"
"I am one who is—and one who was. Let

"I am one who is—and one who was. Let that be enough for you." He lost himself in reverie once more, and

the same icy fingers seemed to clutch at Frank's heart.

The young man made a desperate effort

to control himself and asked again, "What is your name?"

"My name? Ah, that is a question," came the dry voice of the old man. "My name? It was—" For a moment he was slient, deep in heavy thought, as though he were trying to remember things long hidden in the dust of years, and when Frank could bear the silence no longer and was just about to burst out in a loud demand for the truth, he went on.

"It should not matter to you what it was.

For the present you may call me . . . when I am with you . . . Mr. X. Let that be enough."

By this time Frank was coming out of his dazed state and seeing things in a clearer light. He pressed his questions with an obstinate insistency, but nothing he said could disturb the unassailable calm of the old man who sat within a few feet of him and yet was as far away as the most distant worlds.

"Tell me, if you can, what that table is doing here?" Frank demanded sharply.

He pointed to the dust-covered piece of furniture which he was sure he had seen earlier that night in the tent of Celeste the Gypsy... the table that had tapped out a warning for his father.

A crafty look came into the old man's

"THAT table?" he asked quietly. "Why should it not be here? It is my table. Where else should it be?"

Frank stared at him in wonder. He scarcely knew whether he was awake or asleep, and it would not have surprised him to find that he had dreamed all the details of this hideous and unbelievable night.

The old man's voice roused him to a realization of his surroundings, however. "Where should it be?" Mr. X. repeated.

"Where should it be!" cried Frank. "It should be there beside the body of the man it killed . . . the body of my father, who was alive one moment and dead the next."

"Alive one moment and dead the next," mused the old man. "Isn't that the fate of all of us? How can you tell when you are alive . . . or when you are dead?"
"Don't quibble with me," Frank ex-

claimed impatiently. "I am here to find

out the truth." His eves flashed fire. "I congratulate you," said the old man, "The same search has gone on for millions of years-without success. You

are in a large company." "Mr. X.," Frank said earnestly, leaning

forward and gazing intently into the old man's face, "what killed John Custor?" At that moment a strange thing happened. The table on which the old man

was resting his hand lightly, shivered from end to end as though it were human-as though some chill had passed through it! Then it rose slowly until two of its legs were a full twelve inches from the floor.

At this point it rested for a second, and then came down on the old board floor with a bang, swaying from side to side in wild,

abandoned frenzy.

The old man sat quietly, apparently not even noticing the movement of the table, For an instant Frank could not speak, Then:

"My God!" he burst out. "Look at that

table !"

The old man did not speak, and the table kept up its wild swaying.

"Are you pushing the table?" asked Frank, standing over it, yet, for some curious reason, afraid to go too close. There was no answer from the old man,

but the table kept up its queer dance. The old man's hand lay lightly on it, entirely relaxed, and he made no motion to withdraw it. It was apparent that he was exerting no pressure upon it, yet the table moved so violently from its exertions that it actually appeared to be panting from the effort.

Finally, the old man spoke.

"I am not pushing it," he said. "It is answering your question. Put your hands on it."

Hardly knowing what he was doing, Frank pulled up a chair, sat down before the table and put his hands on it. For a few seconds it quivered, and then was still,

M R. X.'s strange eyes studied him con-templatively. "Are you prepared to receive a message from one who has passed

"What do you mean?" asked Frank, "Do the dead speak through the medium of tables?"

Mr. X. shook his head again, "Who knows how they speak . . . or who is dead?"
"But this table——"

"I have no explanation," said Mr. X,

"But if you wish to try you are at liberty to do so."

"How do you know that there is a message for me?" persisted Frank. "And how do you know it is from one who has passed on ?"

"We know many things without knowing the source of our knowledge," replied Mr. X. "It is well not to probe too far into things that we are not able to understand."

"WHY can't we understand?" Frank questioned, his brain muddled by all this metaphysical theorizing,

"Isn't it conceivable to you that there is a limit to our ability to understand, just as there is a limit to our strength? may be able to lift a hundred-pound weight off the floor, but can you lift a thousand-pound weight?" He shook his head. "No. my boy. Be content with knowing that many things may be possible-may be true -without your being able to understand them. There is such a thing as a thousandpound weight, even though you cannot lift it, and there is such a thing as truth, even though you cannot understand it."

Frank was silent in the face of this entirely unassailable logic, but his thoughts

were racing rapidly.

"After all," he reasoned to himself, "why So many things have happened tonight which are entirely beyond my own knowledge and experience that I may just as well accept whatever comes to me and make what use of it I can-even though I do not understand the source."

He looked at Mr. X. "Very well," he said simply, "I am will-

ing to try."

"You do well," said the old man, placing his hands on the table.

Frank did likewise, and for a second or two they sat there in silence, waiting for some sign.

Nothing happened.

Frank looked around uneasily, snatching a quick glance over his shoulder, hardly knowing what he expected to find there.

"Isn't it too light here?" he asked. "We might dim the light, I think." He nodded toward the lamp behind Mr. X.

"Yes, I think it would be wise," assented the old man.

Frank started to rise, but before he could leave his seat, the lamp began to shed a softer and softer light, until it was almost

out. And then, unaccountably, it changed color, and the light became red!

Frank sank back in his seat, in a stupor of amazement. He stared at Mr. X.

"How did you do that?" he demanded.
"I didn't do it." said Mr. X. "Do you

think it is a trick of mine?"

"I don't know what it is," said Frank.
"If it's a trick, it is a very clever one. How
did you do it?"

"I JUST told you I didn't do it," returned Mr. X. without emotion. "Don't worry about who did it, or how it was done. These things can be done very easily by—" he paused for a moment and then went on—"by those who are interested in doing such things. Didn't I tell you to try to accept what you see without inquiring too far into the source?"

"I know but-"

"Yes, but never mind that. You are here to get the answer to a certain question, are you not?"

"Vee"

"Well, if you want that answer, don't allow yourself to be concerned with matters that have nothing whatever to do with the question. Will you go ahead now?"

Frank shrugged his shoulders. "I don't

"Put your hands on the table and con-

centrate," said the old man coldly. "Or go

in peace."

Without another word Frank placed the palms of his hands lightly on the table and sat staring into the unfathomable void

that he felt all around him.

For some little time they sat motionless, and Frank could feel that the temperature of the room was gradually lowering. An icy chill seemed to envelope him. Mr. X. sat as rigid as a statue and it seemed to Frank that he could detect no breathing, no signs of life, except the occasional flicker of his deep, mysterious eyes.

Then, suddenly, there was a sharp, low knock from somewhere within the wood of the table, and Frank felt a thrill and a fore-boding. Drops of cold perspiration stood out on his brow, and he longed for the company of other human beings. The presence of the singular Mr. X. was of no comfort to him, for he had a strange feeling about the old man . . . as though he could hardly be counted among human things. He shook this feeling off and gave his attention to the business at hand.

There were more knockings in the wood, and then a slight movement of the table itself. Slowly, deliberately, it tilted up on two legs and rested itself against the knees of Frank. The table paused for a moment, and then dropped down and tilted itself in the opposite direction. There it halted also, then dropped again, and began a sort of rhythmic swaying, so gentle, yet so decided, that it seemed almost as though some human personality were actuating it ... or, rather, as though the table had a human personsitiv.

Faster and faster it swayed and rocked, and then began a series of rapid tiltings from one side to the other

"Speak to it," commanded the even voice of the old man. "Speak to it,"

In a voice that shook slightly, Frank

"It has a message for you, I think," re-

plied Mr. X. "Ask it about that."

In the meantime the table was rocking

faster and faster in a frenzy of impatience and excitement. A doubt entered Frank's mind.

"Say!" he exclaimed. "You're not pushing it, are you?"

The old man did not answer, but took his hands off the table and moved away from it.

And the table rocked still faster!
"You see, I am not even near it," came calmly from the old man. He had risen and walked across the room to a rocking-chair near the far wall. Only his keen eyes were alive as he sat there, immovable, waiting for what might happen—a small, shriveled figure with coat collar turned up as though to ward off some eternal chill."

as though to ward off some eternal chill.

A corresponding chill went through
Frank; he shivered as though he were in
the coldness of the tomb. He found his
voice at last, striving unsuccessfully to hold
down the swaying table while he spoke. It

down the swaying table while he spoke. It moved under his hands like a living thing! "What shall I do now?" he asked Mr. X. "Speak to it," came back the old man's

tones, monotonous and without emotion. It was as though a machine spoke, a machine with the voice of a human being.

FRANK had a strange sense of being alone—alone with a table that unaccountably moved and with a man who was, somethow, not a man but an automaton!

"What shall I say?" he asked hesitantly,
"Ask who it is," directed Mr. Xi, "and
whether it has a message for you. One
rap is no and three will mean yes. It will
spell out its message, stopping at the letter
needed."

Frank turned again to the table, feeling as though he was in another world-a world strange to him, one in which he hardly knew whether he was alive or dead, "Have you a message for me?"

In answer the table stopped its wild movement for a moment, then rose and fell three times so violently that he had to move hastily backward to prevent a sharp blow on his kneecap.

"Do you know me?" he asked.

For answer the table began to spell out a message, and Frank spelled with it: "A . . . b . . . c . . . d. . . . " Through the alphabet it went, stopping at the letter

The answer came faster from that point. "You . . . are . . . the . . . man." Frank was leaning forward now, his finger

tips hardly touching the table. . . . whose . . . father . . . was . . .

killed . . . tonight . . . : "I am," answered Frank, an eerie feeling pervading him, and he flashed a hasty glance over his shoulder, as though some cold, deadly presence were standing near him dictating this strange message.

"Can you help me?" he asked the table, now thoroughly interested and needing no prompting from the silent figure across

The table rapped three times in the affirmative. "Can you tell me who murdered my

father-and why?" The table rapped three times again.

"Who are you?"

He waited with halted breath for the reply, and the table paused before answering, standing hesitant on two legs. Then slowly it settled down to the floor, rose again and began to rap out this message:

"I . . . am . . . he . . . whom you . . . will . . . never . . . know. I . . . have . . . passed. . . .

FRANK was quiet for a moment, trying to decide how to continue his questioning. Then he spoke,

"How long ago did you die?"

The answer came quickly:

"I . . . have . . . never . . . lived . . . in . . . your . . . sense . . . of . . . the . . . word. . . . No . . . one . . . knows . . . what ! . . it . . . means . . . to . . . live."

Frank saw that he would get nowhere with this line of questioning, and, struck as he was by the uncanniness of the thing, he felt he would have to proceed boldly.

"Who murdered John Custor?" he asked. There was a silence and the table seemed to hesitate. Then, suddenly, it began to spell out a message so rapidly that Frank could hardly keep pace with it.

"One . . . whom . . . your . . . father . . . murdered," came the staccato rappings of the table, which now rocked crazily as though possessed by some violent spirit.

Frank was thunderstruck, not knowing what to make of such an enigmatic message. He was aroused from his bewildered contemplation of the table by a chuckle from

HE turned wildly toward the old man. "What did you say?"

"I said nothing. It is the table that has been communicating with vou."

"The table just said that my father was murdered by one whom he murdered," Frank muttered, looking at him blankly, Mr. X. nodded. "Then it must be so."

he decided.

"But my father never murdered anybody!" Frank protested. "Why, anybody "Nobody knows anything, my boy," said

Mr. X. "If the table says your father murdered somebody, you can be assured that it must have happened."

"It couldn't have happened! John Custor,

never laid violent hands on anybody!" said the son of John Custor. "You do not know whether he did or

not," the old man replied, and as he spoke, the table rapped three times in such violent agreement that it almost twisted itself from under Frank's hands. "The message is plain bosh," Frank de-

clared, now rather angry at all this, and beginning to feel that he was being made a fool of.

"I don't think so," returned Mr. X. calmly.

"It must be!" Frank exclaimed sharply, "If the man was already murdered and dead-whether my father did it or someone else-how could he kill my father? Answer me that !"

The old man stirred slightly in his chair. "There are many things, my boy, that cannot be answered by you-or by me. The greatest truths in life are unanswerable. You will learn that as you grow older."

Mr. X. lapsed back into his reverie, and Frank, baffled, addressed himself again to the table which was quivering under his finger tips.

the dirt of an empty lot, walled in by buildings on all sides.

He looked around incredulously, feeling somehow that he must be a disembodied spirit, for surely if he were in his right senses this thing could not be. It was impossible!

And yet there he was! Gone completely was the small antique shon—gone was the old tenement that had housed it, and gone was the singular old man who had called himself Mr. X., and who really was something that was beyond the power of Frank Custor to conceive.

HE rose slowly from the ground, brushing the dirt from his trousers—good, rich, honest dirt, the reality of which he could youch for. Then he looked around him.

His first impression was verified. It was an ordinary East Side street, and the lot where he stood was probably the only vacant one in the whole section. And a moment before, it had not been an empty lot at all.

He passed a hand before his eyes, as if the trouble were in his brain instead of outside of it. Suddenly he remembered the curious story Celeste had told about buying the tipping table in an antique shop that had later turned out to be an empty lot—and

he laughed grimly.
"Right enough," he said to himself.

Her story, then, had unquestionably been true. He had experienced a great deal that it was impossible for him to understandperhaps impossible for anyone to understand. He became convinced that his father had been done to death by forces outside the visible world—by powers that received their authority from the vast and unknown spirit realm, which seemed to be all around him, hemming him in.

Yet what good would that solution be, so far as the police were concerned; he could imagine himself telling what had happened to some police sergeant! he conclusion that the policeman would draw was obvious, of course. He would say the fram was drunk, and had gone to sleep in this empty lot and dreamed it all.

this empty lot and dreamed it all.

And as for a spiritual explanation of a
murder—he laughed mirthlessly. He knew
there was no chance of getting by with any

such yarn.

But, if he had not hit upon the truth, what was the right explanation?

He shook his head in bewilderment and walked slowly to the dimly lighted street. He was very tired and needed nothing so much as to get some rest. For half an hour he walked the streets of the East Side, searching for a hotel where he might pass unnoticed; and at last, on Second Avenue, he found just what he was looking for.

It was the Hotel International, a place that had once been blatantly respectable, but had now fallen upon civil times. There were many rooms to be had, some with bath, the sleepy clerk at the desk informed him, but as he didn't have any baggage he would have to pay in advance.

This Frank readily did, signing the name of John Winthrop—the first name that occurred to him—on the register.

"Wanta leave a call fer tomorrow, Mr. Winthrop?" inquired the clerk, playing with his pencil.

"No, I want to sleep," said Frank.
"Please see that I'm not disturbed."
"All right," said the clerk. "There ain't

nobody who'll disturb you."

He rose rather heavily and resentfully from behind the desk and took up his keys. "Have to show you your room myself, Mr. Winthrop," he said. "No boys at this

time of night."

Frank followed him up one flight of stairs and was shown into a fairly presentable and reasonably clean room, with a bathroom, a telephone connecting with the

switchboard downstairs, and other modern conveniences. "Good night," said the clerk, pausing sig-

nificantly.
"Wait a minute," said Frank. He felt in his trousers pocket and extracted a quarter. This he gave to the clerk.

"Good night," said the clerk. "Thank you." And he was off, closing the door softly behind him.

Fully dressed, except for his coat and shoes, Frank threw himself on the bed, his brain reeling with the events of the night, his body crying out for rest.

B UT for a long time he could not sleep. His mind rejected so many things that had happened. It did not seem possible that his father was dead, and that he had been murdered by someone whom he himself had murdered!

It could not be true that he had received messages from a table in a shop that did not exist, and that he had spoken to an old man named Mr. X., who also did not exist 1

also did not exist!

After all, these were things that any ordi-

nary human brain must reject-facts that could not be accepted without more preparation and without more knowledge.

Gradually, as he sank into slumber, all of these thoughts merged into a great jumble, and he found himself the center of an excited group that included his father, Mr. X., Celeste and her mother. The latter was able to walk as well as anyone, and protested loudly and volubly that she could be alive if she wished to be-but she did not wish to. And between and around her feet silently glided the snakes that had been let loose by Sadie.

THEN gradually all the rest faded and there was no one left but Celeste's mother, in a white robe, with her hair floating around her face, which seemed to be devoid of all features except a mouth, through which she kept repeating over and over again that she could be alive whenever she

wished to be,

And then she, too, faded away, and his slumber was black and dreamless, though it contained all the restless qualities of a bad dream, and he tossed occasionally from side to side in an effort to find some position in which his tortured body could rest.

When he woke, it was as though someone had pulled at his shoulder to awaken him. So real did this seem to him that he looked up, heavy with sleep, and said:

"Yes, all right. I'm awake now." Then he saw that he was alone!

He stared at his surroundings as though he was looking into a new world. He tried to shake off the feeling of having been awakened by someone, but could not. He felt as though there was somebody in the room with him, someone standing over him, someone who had desired him to awaken for a particular reason.

For a moment he waited. This he did consciously, knowing that he was waiting, although he did not know just what he was waiting for. There was, however, a doom or a destiny hanging over his head. Something was about to happen to him, something predestined, something important!

He wondered what this day would bring forth. His mind leaped from event to event, and in an instant he was once more master of the details of everything that had occurred the day before.

The thing for him to do, he knew, was to keep under cover if he could, until he could arrive at some logical solution of the mystery of his father's death. By now, he supposed, the news of the murder was in

the papers.

He did not worry greatly about the fate of the others who had been present with him the night before, as he believed that no one would make a serious attempt to connect them with the crime. They had probably been taken into custody as material witnesses, he imagined, but were no doubt released immediately on bail. As for himself, he thought he would be of much more use, if he were free of surveillance and could continue his investigation alone and unhampered.

This, of course, brought his mind immediately back to the curious meeting with Mr. X., and for a moment he began to wonder whether it was all a dream. Surely he must have imagined this queer business, for the man and his house could not have disappeared before his very eyes. Things do not happen that way in everyday life.

But his mind rejected this theory, for if Mr. X. had been a dream, all the other events of that terrible night must have been imaginary, too-and this he knew was not

These thoughts passed through his mind with startling rapidity, consuming not more, perhaps, than two or three seconds-and then the thing happened that he had been waiting for!

The telephone rang! Somehow he knew that this call was very important-that it was something which had been predestined

to occur.

Of course, it was curious that the phone should ring, for no one knew he was there and no one knew his real name; yet, as he lifted the receiver off the hook and spoke into the transmitter, he did not think it was so curious. He was ready for the message, whatever it was.

"Hello," he called,

"Frank Custor!" said a woman's voice. It was not a question; it was a mere statement of fact.

HE turned pale with astonishment. It was not merely because someone knew his whereabouts-the voice was that of the mother of Romany Celeste!

"Who is this?" he almost shouted into the

phone. "This is Viola Carstin, Frank," she answered kindly, and it was as though she was beside him and had merely breathed the

words into his ear. "Where are you, and how did you know I was here?" inquired Frank, with increasing wonder.

"Where I am does not matter at this time.

Frank," said the voice of Viola Carstin, "I know, but I would like to come to see

you and-" he began.

"You cannot come to see me now," she answered gently. "You will come when the time arrives. At present you are needed where you are." There was a finality in her voice that he could not gainsay.

"But how did you know that I was here?"

he asked again. "No one knew that I—" "Well, perhaps someone did know, Frank, You cannot always tell about that. Let it be enough for you to know that I was able to find you when necessary. I have a mes-

sage for you." "What is it?" he asked, "Has it anything to do with my father's-" he paused

for a moment; disliking to use the word "death."

"A great deal," she cut in, her voice calm and still-and now it seemed as though it were coming from a great distance.

"Go to Mr. X. again," she directed, and her voice seemed thin and small now, coming to him through infinities of space and eternities of time-and fading away into noth-

ingness. "But he is gone!" shouted Frank into the transmitter, as though by raising his voice he could bridge the timeless chasm that lay

between them.

"He will be there tonight . . . tonight . . . tonight. . . ." Her voice faded away, and he could feel that there was now no one at the other end of the line.

He replaced the receiver with a puzzled sigh, and tried to think, How strangely she had spoken! Just what did she mean? And how, indeed, had she managed to locate him here? The clerk downstairs, the one at the

telephone, did not know Frank's name. He picked up the receiver again and in a moment was answered by the voice of the clerk at the switchhoard

"Yes, sir," came the voice of the operator, "Say! About that call you just put through here," began Frank, "I would like to know how---

"What call?" inquired the operator.

"Why, the one I just had," replied Frank. "Don't all calls go through the switchboard down there?"

"They certainly do," replied the clerk, "but I put no call through for you."

There was a short, puzzled silence on the

part of Frank.

"Then maybe it came directly from outside," he ventured.

"It couldn't have," said the clerk. "The only connection you have is through the board down here. Say, you must be dreaming-wake up, it's eleven o'clock,"

THERE was the click of disconnection. and Frank hung up his receiver.

Half an hour later, after bathing and rearranging his clothing. Frank paid his hill and stepped out into the sunlight, afraid to stay in the hotel too long, for fear the police had already sent out an alarm for him.

He stopped at the corner and bought a copy of an afternoon paper, which he glanced at quickly. And through his mind ran an undercurrent of wonder at this curious telephone conversation with Viola Carstin, the mother of Romany Celeste.

As he had expected, the news of the murder of John Custor was emblazoned across the front page. His eyes skipped over the details-until he came to a statement that made his blood turn cold.

The body of Viola Carstin had been found, dead, at Ulmer Park at three in the

And yet, half an hour before, at eleven o'clock, he had talked with her on the telephone!

What is the purpose behind the strange message from Viola Carstin? Will Frank dare to visit the uncanny Mr. X. again? Can be possibly dis-court a solution of the crime that will satisfy the police? The amazing con-clusion of this startling story will appear in the March Ghost Stories—on the news stands February 28rd. It will give you a thrill you won't forget!



The Evil History of a Cupboard

An Editorial by ROBERT NAPIER

AN a room—or a piece of furniture—possess the personality of a wicked living thing? Is it possible for an inanimate object—such as a cupboard—to exercise a weird fascination over men, driving them on to terrible deeds of violence?

Those who have studied these questions answer "ves" and they point for proof to some of the strangest

cases of crime and suicide on record.

One of the most astounding cases occurred only last August in London. Vere Bennett, twenty-six years old, the stage director of the Winter Garden Theater, bought an oak cupboard at an auction in Oxford Street. In the most unheard-of way imaginable he

thereby sealed his own doom.

Mr. Bennett was not of a morbid nature. All his acquaintances will testify to that fact. On the contrary he was "one of the sanest of men." It is also a matter of record that he had had no financial difficulties. Stanley Brightman, manager of the Winter Garden Theater, has sworn under oath that he was a methodical and highly valued employee, well on the way toward a brilliant career. Doctor Ian McPherson, police surgeon, stated in court that he was a perfectly healthy man, with no trace of physical or mental disease.

Vere Bennett took his newly acquired cupboard to his mother's apartment in West Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, but there he met with unexpected opposition. Mrs. Bennett did not want the thing in the house. "It smelled like a tomb," she declared.

His brother, Charles Bennett, the playwright

"What made my brother buy that cupboard, I don't know. It seemed to fascinate him. Why, I cannot tell, because it was ugly and quite The extraorunsuitable for a flat. dinary thing about it is that everyone who saw it, including my mother, hated it from the first, and several people said that there was something uncanny about it. course, it may have been nerves on our part, but I don't think so, as I am a very level-headed man. Somehow I felt that this cupboard would bring trouble everywhere."

However, Vere insisted on keeping the cupboard and a compromise was arranged. The thing was placed in the bathroom.

On the day of the final disaster the young stage director was in a gay mood, joking continually with his mother. After helping her to sort out some old clothes to send to the Salvation Army, he went to have his bath while Mrs. Bennett prepared a meal for him. He told her to call him when it was ready.

That was the last time he was seen alive.

About a quarter of an hour later Mrs. Bennett went to call him. Receiving no answer, she forced the bathroom door open.

Vere Bennett was hanging in the cupboard he had bought a week before. He was stark dead.

The coroner's inquest was held at Holborn and no possible reason could be discovered for suicide. Vere Bennett had everything to live for; he was young, ambitious, healthy. He had never shown the slightest sign of abnormality at any time in his life.

In the light of the testimony of Bennett's acquaintances, the official verdict on his death contains more than a hint of irony. There was nothing for a materialminded coroner to say except "suicide while of unsound mind." The coroner remarked that it was "a case of impulse."

Subsequently some very curious facts were brought to light concerning the cupboard. It had formerly belonged to the late Mr. James White, the financier, who had also committed suicide. Even the second-hand dealer (a woman) who had sold the cupboard to Vere Bennett admitted that there was "something sinister" about it.

What conclusion can an investigator reach in regard to this strange case? Was the cupboard the actual cause of two tragedies? Charles Bennett, the brother of the deceased, had no doubt on this point. He burned the supboard, hoping thereby to destroy its evil influence forever.

The scientific study of such cases as this one, seems of the highest importance to this writer. No person, willing to face the truth, can deny that subtle psychic influences are responsible for much of the happiness and the tragedy in the world. Beyond a doubt the good influences are infinitely more powerful than the evil ones-but we must learn to understand these forces before we can hope to secure the full benefits of contact with the spiritual universe. And it is equally essential that we should do everything in our power to destroy the unwholesome influences. GHOST STORIES is dedicated to the great task of spreading knowledge and understanding of the psychic forces that are, after all, the deepest and greatest realities of life.

READERS are invited to send brief accounts of personal experiences with the occult to The Meeting Place. The correspondent's full name and address must be signed to each letter but very will print only the initials or a pseudonym if it is requested. Answers to other correspondent's letters will also be printed.

Here is a chance to get in touch with persons all over the world

who are interested in the supernatural!

Haunted Cemeteries

A RECENT newspaper report from Kilross, Ireland, states that Patrick Brennan, the caretaker of the local cemetery, resigned because he was "afraid of ghosts." This item was of particular interest to me

because in the course of my life I have known three or four caretakers in cemeteries—and without exception they have believed in apparitions. However, in no case have they indicated any fear of the dead.

Only a few days ago the caretaker in the oldest graveyard in my home town, a sober, hard-working old man, told me that he would often look up from his work, when he was raking the dead leaves from the graves, and find himself surrounded by the unsubstantial forms of the dead. He could hear them talking to each other in such thin, piping voices that they were bardly distinguishable. But he never bothered them and they never bothered them and they never bothered them.

He asked me not to tell people in the town about his experiences, because they might think he was crazy. For this reason please do not print my address.

G. M.

Texas.

A Spirit Photograph of Lincoln

Modern investigators seem to be inclined to doubt the authenticity of all so-called spirit photographs—but there are some cases of spirit photography that are apparently beyond natural explanation. For instance, I would like to refer skeptics to the following case:

In 1867, two years after Abraham Lincoln's death, Mrs. Lincoln visited the photograph gallery of Mr. William Mumler in

Boston, Massachusetts.

She did not give her name but went incognito, and sat for her picture under another name. When she went to obtain her proof, the lady in attendance said to her: "Madam, a very strange result has come upon the plate with your photo. President Lincoln is standing directly behind you."

She replied, "That's all right. I am his widow."

Many copies were taken from the original negative and were sold to students of occult, phenomena in various parts of the country. Most of these, I think, are still in existence,

Westport, Connecticut.

The Strange Affair of the Bet

My husband gambles pretty regularly and in November he lost a considerable sum of money on the national election. He was ashamed to tell me how much, but he admitted that he would have to take the money out of our savings account. This made me feel bitterly resentful, for I had sacrificed many things in order to increase our savings—and now I saw all my work swept away in a moment.

The tears came to my eyes.

My husband tried to kid me along. He said: "Don't take it so hard. Maybe it's

not as bad as all that."

I thought I could do a little bluffing myself. I looked him straight in the eye and answered: "Oh, I know how much you lost. It was—"I stopped. Suddenly the numerals "439" formed themselves in front of my eyes. "You lost four hundred and thirty-nine dollars," I said

He turned red and the strangest look came into his eyes. "How did you know?"

he exclaimed.

Of course I couldn't explain. When I started speaking, I had not the slightest idea how much he had lost. I was merely trying to make him confess. To this day I don't know how or why the exact amount flashed into my mind. There was no reason why I should think of \$439—our savings account amounted to \$1,200.

My husband accused me of spying on him, of searching his pockets, and many other things that I had not even thought of doing.

The whole thing still seems a little spooky

to me. If there is such a thing as telepathy, this must be a pure case of it, my husband's worried concentration on the amount of his losses serving in some mysterious way to communicate the exact figure to my brain B. G. M.

New York City.

Savage Modoc Mine

In the October editorial in GHOST STORIES it is stated we have no way of telling whether animals see ghosts.

Some time ago I wrote a successful sconario entitled "The Story of the Savage
Modoc Mine," which was suggested to me
by an elderly mining man who claimed he
owed his entire fortune to the fact that his
father's spirit actually showed him the location of the mine in which he had met his
death at the hands of Modoc Indians in
California. This man said that the presence
of his father's spirit was first discovered by
his dog and burro whose hasty, frightened
retreat down the mountain trail, just at dusk
one evening, caused him to look up the path
and see his father's form, as natural as in
life.

The spirit indicated that his son should dig into the hillside at a certain point, and then vanished. The result was the discovery of the skeletons of his father and his father's partner, with tomahawks in their skulls. They were buried in a tunnel leading to a rich, partly developed mine.

ing to a rich, partly developed mine.

From old residents in the vicinity I verified the details and then wrote the scenario.

I believe the resulting production was the

first ghost film ever pictured.

Charles Cleveland.

San Francisco, California.

The Phantom Train Wreck

One morning I awoke feeling very depressed. I could not account for my mental condition and tried to analyze it all during the forenoom. Some time after lunch I remembered my dream of the previous night. I had dreamed that my mother (deaf for fifteen years) stood beside my bed, wringing her hands and shaking her -head. I made up my mind that the dream was responsible for my depression.

The following night I awoke about midnight with cold chills creeping up and down my spine. I looked across the room and saw my mother as plainly as though she were a living person. She stood in the doorway, wringing her hands and shaking her head.

As I sat up, I thought I heard the word "wait" uttered in a whisper. I turned on the light but found the room entirely empty. Puzzled and ill at ease, I lay awake for

a long time. When I did fall asleep, I dreamed I was in a train wreck.

The whole experience seemed entirely meaningless, for I was not planning a trip of any kind nor was I confronted by any

decision or crisis in my life.

A week later my husband received a telegram asking for one of us to come to the east coast immediately, as his mother was dangerously ill. Business complications made it impossible for him to go, so I hurricelly got ready, intending to start the next day, which was a Tuesday. In the meantime I had almost forgotten about the dream

That night I awoke to see my mother standing on the far side of the room. She was pointing to the wall, and as I looked, I saw these words appear in large black letters:

Wait till Wednesday.

At the breakfast table the next morning I announced my intention of waiting until the next day. At first my husband insisted that I start at once, but after I explained my reason, he did not urge me.

That night the evening paper published a detailed account of the wreck of the fast east-bound train which I had planned to take. Several passengers were killed and many others seriously injured.

s seriously injured.

D. C. R.

San Diego, California.

He Cut a Ghost in Two

I saw this ghost story in the Vancouver Province and I enjoyed it so much that I thought you might want to reprint it in The Meeting Place. It was written by J. W. Burns. I won't vouch for its authenticity but I do know that it accurately portrays the beliefs of the old-time Indians. "This is what an Indian told me:

"Many years ago I was greatly annoyed by a strange ghost that wandered into our village. He followed me around for two or three months. I spoke to him several times to let me alone. At first I treated him as politely as I would any ordinary ghost, and stepped to one side to let him pass, but just (Centinued on page 125)



SPIRIT TALES

A Great Suffragette's Blood-curdling Experience and Other Items of Interest

By COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

ceeded.

N autobiography, prepared for public consumption, oftens omits carrian colorful items which would add greatly to the interest of the narrative. Such items, however, may be rather "out of the picture," thereby accounting for their omission; and so it is that the autobiographic reminiscences of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, for twenty-eight years president of the National Woman's Suffrage Association, contains no mention of her numerous psychic experiences. It is from a London entry in her diary that we get the following:

"At a dinner given the other night by Mrs. C.— M.— I met many interesting people. . . Another guest was Henry Lucy, who has made himself famous as Toby, M. P., of Punch. After he had given us some good stories, Hattie thought it her turn to contribute to the general entertainment, so she related one of my psychic experiences, which appeared to particularly interest Mr. Lucy, who put some questions about the rather hair-raking occurrence."

Mrs. Stanton's daughter adds an explanatory note by giving the story then told, which was published in the Cornhill Magasine. Some years ago, Mrs. Stanton was at Washington at a time when Congress was in session. On applying for a room at a hotel she had been accustomed to frequent, she was told the house was full. After some hesitation the clerk, observing her distress, said that if she would wait half an hour, a room, not the best in the house, but all that was available, should be got ready for her.

It was a small, plainly furnished room on the sixth floor. It had to serve, and she was disposed to make the best of it. She went to bed early and slept soundly

till she was awakened by the sensation of a hand touching her face, and a voice cried, with piteous accent, "Oh, Mother! Wother!" She was profoundly startled but argued with herself that it was only a dream. She determined to go to sleep again, and suc-

Again she was awakened with the hand nervously stroking her face and the bloodcurdling cry, "Oh, Mother!" Mother!"

It was no use trying to sleep. She got up, half-dressed, lit a candle, got a box and sat in the armchair till daybreak, nothing further happening. As soon as she heard the servants moving, she rang the bell, and the chambermaid came in with a startled look. To her the visitor related the experience. "Yes, marm," said the chambermaid, "I told them they ought not to put you in the room. He was only carried out an hour before you came."

"Who was carried out?" said Mrs. Stan-

"Why, the young man who has been lying here for a fortnight in delirium tremens and who died yesterday. He was stretching out his hands, feeling for something, and crying in a heart-breaking voice, 'Oh, Mother! Mother!"

In the story published in the Cornhill Magazine Mrs. Stanton's name was not given, so far as we know, but the fact that this thing happened to Mrs. Stanton has

been revealed by her daughter.

Mrs. Stanton herself remarked that "there were sufficient isms attached to her name without adding spiritualism, or the like!" And this is probably why she carefully kept such experiences out of her autobiography, although another note in her diary gives us the following interesting item:

"Adelaide I- has just dined with us and told us of a haunted house in which she lives, staying bravely alone there at night, seeing visions and hearing strange sounds.... I do not ridicule these stories, for in my own life I have had several marvelous experiences. . . . But I attribute all these strange phenomena to some natural laws which we do not understand, and may never understand,"

Murder by a Hypnotist

MUNICH has been startled by a crime alleged to have been committed by a hypnotist named Jungmann, who has been arrested for murdering Frau Ebenhoch, the wife of an innkeeper, whose body was found in a forest not far from the railway. The police were at first mystified by the discovery of a railway ticket in her bag which showed that her destination was a station farther along the line. Finally they arrested Jungmann, who is a music teacher, and his alleged confession has solved the mystery.

He said his motive was robbery and that he hypnotized the woman, inducing her to leave the train. Finding she had no money on her person, he became enraged and murdered her.

The police have confirmed the fact that

the man is a hypnotist and it is a matter of record that he has been convicted of several crimes in the past.

Stigmata

PROFESSOR THIRRING writes to the American Society for Psychic Research that Paul Diebel, the German "white fakir," has confessed that his phenomena are partly due to fraud; at least, to a great extent, he "helps out" what natural gifts he possesses. Thus, those parts of his skin where he later intends to show stigmata, he previously prepares by means of a sharp instrument. The marks of this instrument completely disappear shortly afterwards.

When he gives a performance a couple of hours later, he is able, by means of concentration, and by a strong effort of will, to increase the blood pressure on the parts of his body which he has previously prepared -and red marks or even blood will appear

This, by the way, is the explanation of a very old conjuring trick where the name of a chosen card is found revealed on the performer's arm.

Doctor Thirring and Mr. Harry Price, foreign research officer of the American Society, have discussed the possibility of Eleonore Zugun having employed some similar means in order to produce her stigmata, but they decided that was impossible as the phenomena were apparently spontaneous after the girl had been under observation for many hours. The fact that the manifestations completely ceased at puberty is further evidence of their genuineness.

Eleonore has now returned to her native Roumania and has set up in business for herself at Czernowitz! I have her trade card in front of me and I notice she has taken a diploma in hair-dressing at Vienna. From ondulare to cosmetica she appears to cater in every way for "woman's crowning glory." If it had not been for her mediumship, Eleonore would still be tilling the fields in her peasant's smock.

Sir Oliver's New Book

SIR OLIVER LODGE has written a new book on spiritualism, which has just appeared in England. It is entitled Why I Believe in Personal Immortality. following quotation from the book will be of interest to readers of GHOST STORIES: "People often wonder about the process

(Continued on page 122)

Were You Born in

February?



Indicate Vour Fate

See Daily Guide for February, page 116

HE men and women born between January 21st and February 19th are the Aquarians. destined first to attain a certain degree of perfection themselves and, secondly, to help those who are still striving to understand.

If you are an Aquarian, you are the one to water and nourish the poor little shrub that is struggling so hard to grow in the city yard, where the high buildings shut off nearly all the sun. You are a friendly person, able to make yourself at home in any country and with all kinds of people; you are tolerant and sympathetic and have great insight into the hearts of others, Traditions, conventions, creeds, or rules and regulations, mean nothing to you. Fundamental truth is of far greater importance and your work should always be in the interest of unity and brotherhood.

Some people have had more experience than others, and some learn the great lessons of life more readily. Among Aquariansas is the case with all other types-there are individuals who are still mere children in

life-experience. Such people are impractical and visionary, amiable and perhaps even inane, vacillating, inefficient and often lazy. They are procrastinators. They are inefficient because they are unable to reach a quick decision, and they lose opportunities because they do not seize the golden hour. They are not definite in anything. They lack the constructive energy required to make their dreams come true.

F you have not achieved the success you hoped for, cultivate concentration and train yourself always to think about what you are doing, no matter how trivial a thing it may be. Listen carefully when anyone gives you instructions; try to remember the exact words. By doing this, you will improve your memory.

Some Aquarians suffer from indifferent health which is due principally to improper circulation. This can be improved by regular but not strenuous or jerky exercise, and by deep breathing in the open air.

There is another type of Aquarian-the (Continued on page 118)

The Planetary Indications for February Are Given Below.

Let them be your daily guide.

- Ask no favors, be careful what you write and take care of your health.
- 2. Avoid excitement and be careful in traveling. Conditions improve late in the evening.
- 3. Visit and enjoy spiritual and mental relaxation but take care not to get cold.

 4. Advertise, push your business affairs,
- deal with the public and ask favors before 3 P.M. Avoid excitement, aggression and possible accidents later. Do nothing of importance in the evening.
- 5. A good day for big business. Not so fortunate for domestic or social affairs.
- 6. Avoid intrigue and misunderstandings. Evening promises romance.
- A day on which the unexpected is likeby to happen—favorable for imaginative, decorative and creative work. Attend to correspondence, sign papers, see lawyers and agents.
- 8. Make proposed changes during the morning; travel and attend to social and financial matters. The morning shopper will find articles of great beauty but must beware of extravagance. Discuss and study inventions.
- New moon. Postpone matters relating to publicity, new enterprises and journeys until Monday. Work on business which has already been commenced.
- Go to church, read, write letters and travel. Spend as much time as possible in the open air.
- Attend to new enterprises, manufacturing and executive work. Give publicity to matters which relate to new business or that concern the public.
- 12. Attend to routine work or hunt for bargains. Buy but do not sell. Protect your-self from cold.
- 13. Buy wearing apparel, see your friends, plan and engage in social activities. This day is favorable for all artistic and social affairs and particularly for women and children.

- 14. A good business day. 'Advertise, and seek promotion.
- 15. Sell, make permanent changes, and keep important engagements during the morning. Do nothing of importance in the afternoon.
- Sell and attend to legal matters.
 Favorable day for financial affairs. See influential people in the evening.
- 17. A fortunate day. See your friends and make new acquaintances. Visit elderly people.
- A day of misfortune and loss. Guard your investments and make no contracts.
- Rapid changes and sudden developments are probable. Spend the day quietly and avoid extravagance.
- An uncertain day for domestic and social affairs.
- 21. Make changes. A favorable day for invention and all matters connected with flying,-electricity, radio, progressive undertakings and associations. Do not plant today and do not cut out garments.
- 22. A fortunate day for social affairs and matters involving the affections. Buy wearing apparel and seek amusement.
- 23. Full moon. Be tactful and avoid domestic discussion. You may receive disturbing news. Afternoon brings much pleasure and success. Make important engagements for afternoon and evening.
 - 24. A day of general happiness.
- 25. Attend to financial and legal affairs; buy and sell. Finish work already begun. Clean and put household affairs in order. Take care of health. Spend evening quietly.
- 26. Attend to clerical matters. You may hear some unexpected news. Seek romance and amusement in evening.
- 27. A day of business activity and enterprise. Attend to matters that require energy and judgment. Attend to investments.
- 28. Seek employment, ask favors and sell. See your friends in the afternoon. Do not move. Get rid of rubbish.

To the great hosts of fiction readers throughout the English speaking world we have the pleasure of introducing the newest Macfadden publication,

he World's Greatest Stories

THIS magazine will not only be a storehouse of the greatest and most thrilling faction to the pass, that it will also put you in touch with the best of our present-day faction. In the pages of this newest of magazines the greatest writers of all time will be monthly guests. Never before has such a galaxy of stars been gathered within the covers of a single magazine. Never before has there been such a literary treat for the price of one issue.

In the February issue we commence the serialization of the greatest of Robert W. Chambers' novels, "The Common Law." This breath-taking tale of the beautiful model and the artist

The state of the most amusing love stories that has ever been printed.

For those who like mystery stories, we have the best work of that modern master, Ben Hecht. This gripping, thrilling mystery yarn, "The Fingers at the Window," will seize you with its grip of stool from the very first word, and will hold you spelbound until its last eyilable has rolled on the property of the beyond your vision.

Among others in this tremendous issue you will find Achmed Abdullah, Guy de Maupassant, Gerald Beaumont, Fulton Oursler, O. Henry-in short, if we continue the list it will read like a

roster of the great literary geniuses of all time.

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Wings of Vengeance

A Thrilling Tale of the Border Air Patrol WHEN Bruce Farrell, ace of the border patrol, kissed Judith Murdock goodbye and took to the air with instructions to bring back Moose McQuane dead or alive, he looked upon it simply as another assignment.

But Judith, out of her woman's intuition, sensed that of all the desperate assignments this loveable, reckless fiancé of hers had ever drawn, he would need help this time more desperately than ever before, even if only the help of a woman.

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Were You Born in February?

(Continued from page 115)

perverted Uranian who must always be different and who wishes to destroy traditional ideas and things although he does not possess any clear idea as to what is to replace the things destroyed. Among the representatives of this type are the eccentrics and anarchists, the continual grumblers and fault-finders, and those exasperating individuals who always know how the world should be run but don't seem to know how to take advantage of their own opportunities.

The constructive Uranian, on the other hand, often becomes world-famous, for the planet Uranus is associated with genius. The psychologist, inventor, vocational expert, successful aviator, electrician and machinist-the student of human nature, the teacher and the healer, the antiquarian, astrologer and creative artist-all these are numbered among successful Aquarians and it is said that eighty per cent of those named in the Hall of Fame were born under the influence of this sign. It is also thought that there are more musicians, artists and writers among Aquarians than are born under any other sign.

The Aquarian colors are sapphire blue and silvery white. Futurist designs, checks, stripes, plaids and polka dots are also associated with the planet Uranus, who is now generally recognized as ruler of Aquarius. -Until the discovery of Uranus, Saturn was known as ruler of this sign and is still allotted part-rulership. His color is dark blue or ashy gray,

As a talisman the Aquarian should wear jade or a sapphire. The flowers ruled by Aquarius are the tulips in all their lovely

coloring, pansies, and yellow primroses and daffodils.

Uranus is now passing over the fifth degree of Aries for the last time for another eighty-four years-the time it takes him to complete his journey through the heavens. During the past two years this planet has traversed more than once the first seven degrees of the pioneer sign, and those born between the 18th and 28th of March have had many unexpected experiences and sudden changes. However, they (Continued on page 120)



"The Price of a Lie"

OH, how Nell wanted her darling little girls to be beautifully dressed that Easter Sunday! It seemed almost as if nothing else ever really mattered so much. But where was the money for new dresses and hats to come from? Joe, of late, had been having such a hard time making both for new dresses and hars to only from Joe, or late, had been awaig such a large time making both ends meet. It had been a desperate struggle for him to get enough dollars together to meet the mortgage on their little home—those dollars that now lay hidden in his tool chest.

It must have been Satan himself that made Nell decide to take that money, spend it, and pretend that the house had been robbed. How carefully she planned everything. But the best laid plans of men and women go astray, and Nelk-

You'll find that her thrilling and tragic story will make your heart skip and bring tears to your eyes in the March True Story Magazine.

Other outstanding stories of the March TRUE STORY are: "My Mysterious Lover," "All for a Man's Promise," "My Own Miracle," "Meddling in Love," "Aching Arms," "The Beautiful Sinner," "After the Injunation." Altogether, there are sixteen soul-revealing documents.

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Dancers and Dance Lovers!

If you was professional chances, of a follower of those who dance on the stages of American theaters, you cannot be without Tim Doken Massadon. He without Tim Doken Massadon. He cannot be described the February issue contains an article by Albertina Raseh on the American ballet. You have seen her groung of dangers on Broadway and it was subject. He was a deal with the base to say on the subject, the her get varieties are the subject of the subject of the ballet subject with circuits supply you, in very sizeable city of the United States, with ever new anottestiment. How is the great Kells circuit organized, and who will extertal you use vary? These questions are answered in this interesting

Retti dryellt organized, und who will einertain to one next year. I need questions are answered in this interesting article by Edward A. Goewey.

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Spirit Tales

(Continued from page 114)

of mediumistic communication and may doubt whether it is legitimate, even if it were possible, to talk familiarly through any channel with those whom it seems customary to regard as either sacred or extinct.

"As a matter of fact, they are neither: and the sooner the world realizes this truth in a rational way, the better both for them and the world.

"Difficulties due to long habit and tradition must be gradually overcome, partly by direct experience, but in the first in-

stance by reading and study.

"So I address myself to those who feel some difficulty-perhaps even a religious difficulty-about the bare idea of posthumous communion, and who seriously ask the question: Can it be possible to hold converse with the dead, or for them in any way to communicate with us?

"If it be true that the dead know not anything, they have no longer any personal existence, and it cannot be possible to communicate with nonentity.

"But this is reasoning in a hind-before or preposterous manner. The right method of attack is to ascertain first, by experiment and observation, whether communication is possible; and then from that fact, if it becomes an established fact, to infer that, after all, the dead do know something, and that they have a personal existence.

"But then the obvious question arises: How can it be possible to communicate with anyone, however intelligent, who possesses no physical instrument or organ for the conversion of thought into act? How can it be possible to appreciate mere thought?

"A partial answer is given by the ex-perimental discovery of telepathy, which appears to be a direct process of transmission from mind to mind. But still, for any kind of reproduction, or utilization or conveyance to others, a physical process is necessary; and, therefore, so far as we know, a physiological mechanism is necessary.

"Now, the facts of multiple personality show that a single human body can, in exceptional circumstances, be played upon by several intelligences, not only one: the normal occupant can, as it were, be ousted sometimes and its place taken by others,

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"There are certain people, whose value for the purpose of enlarging our experience is much greater than has yet been recognized, who self-sacrificingly allow the bodily part of themselves to be employed in conveying messages which are received telepathically or they know not how, from intelligences other than their own.

"Their own personality goes into abeyance or into trance for a time, while their body and brain continue active, and thus messages are transmitted about facts previously unknown to them, and which subsequently may-leave no accessible deposit in their memory.

"The secondary personality in temporary control need not be obtrustive or troublesome, it may be well-controlled and ametable to reason and convenience, but it is rot the normal intelligence of the medium, and the stratum of memory tapped is a different one. Facts known to some other person come to the front; facts familiar to the medium recede for a time into the background.

"The mind and memory thus tapped can be occasionally traced to an ordinary incarnate person; but the material or flesh body does seem to be an obstruction, if only because sensory-methods of communication are so customary and familiar. It turns-out to be really easier for the medium's organism to be controlled by a discarnate intelligence, that is, by one who, having gone through the complete process of dissolution or dissociation from matter is commonly spoken of as 'dead.'

"Whatever other and higher methods of communion there may be—among them what is spoken of as inspiration—this rather common-place utilization of a medium's power is a gemine one; and many there are who are familiar by direct first-hand experience, with messages thus received. The facts selected for mention or transmission in such cases are often trivial domestic occurrences, but the triviality of the incidents matters nothing if they have identifying character. Events of importance are not nearly so useful; for either they can hardly be verified or they are of the nature of public knowledge."

"The element of strangeness about this kind of communication is not that matter is moved in accordance with a code, so as to reproduce thought in another percipient mind—for that is equally true of speech



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and writing. The strangeness of supernormal instances is that the substance of the communication is alien to the person transmitting it, and is characteristic of some other person who is dramatically and vividly represented as really desirous of sending intelligible information or else an identifying and comforting message, and who employs such bodily organ and physiological mechanism as he may be permitted for the time to use

"The value and importance of the present terrestrial existence is fully recognized by our friends on the other side. It would be a poor return for the privilege of occasional communication and an especially ungrateful recognition of the sold end self-sacrificing spirit in which so many in recent times have gone to their death, if lamentation for them or an eager desire for committee or an eager desire for commitment of the self-sacrificing private of the self-sacrificing varieties with the full activity of every kind of service such as is possible to us in our present grade of existence."

A "Medium" Confesses

M UNNING has completed the lurid account of his long-sustained pseudomediumship and has exposed every trick and fake which he employed to deceive the very credulous people who sat with him, According to Mr. Price, not one per cent of this impostor's not-very-subtle methods could have been employed, had there been imposed even a rudimentary control. It was not a case of a clever charlatan deceiving a number of sincere people who did their best to impose conditions; it was a classic example of a very ordinary faker taking advantage of a number of very gullible spiritualists whose last thought was that the medium should be adequately controlled.

In an attempt to save their faces, these credulous sitters are now rushing into print in an amusing endeavor to prove that Munning is bying when he says that all his tricks were—tricks! In the Sunday Express Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has a long apologie for the shortcomings of Munning who, he declares, was not always frandulent. As one of the "procis" that Munning is lying, he mentions that when during a seance the fakt imitated the bark of a big dog, an Alsatian in a neighboring kennel gave an answering bark.

The Meeting Place (Continued from page 112)

as soon as I'd pause, he'd come to a standstill and begin to grin and twist his face into all sorts of wicked shapes.'

"'This happened at night?' I ventured to ask.

"'Night-no! It happened in daylight. But one day I thought I felt very strong and that the spirit of some brave ancestor leaped within me. I left the house and took my dog along, but before I went out, I asked my wives to follow me at a distance."

"'Did you say wife or wives?"

"'Wives-ves, sir, I forget how many I had at that time. In those days a man could pick up a good wife sort of cheap-well, for a couple of blankets and a bear skin. I believe I had seven and sometimes when I reflect, I think it was nine, but that's a long time ago. Now I have none. I met a ghost on the trail; he looked sullen enough to frighten the bravest man, but me-I well remember it-I walked right up to him and before he could dodge or side-step I cut him in two, straight down, with a piece of dogwood,'

"While the ghost-layer paused to take breath, I asked him if he saw the appari-

tion again. "'I was surprised,' he continued; 'when I looked to one side, there before me stood one-half of the fiend grinning worse than ever. I could detect evil in his ghostly eye. I didn't stand to argue, for suddenly I felt that the spirit that had aroused me and given me courage had now played the traitor and deserted me. I made a quick turn to flee in the opposite direction, but as I turned to run, there in front of me stood the other half, blinking in the most threatening attitude! I ran toward the house, and you can believe it or not but I outran the dog."

K. T.:

Vancouver, B. C.

While staying at a seaside resort for a week-end-I had a very strange vision. We occupied a room one floor from the top of the building. It was clean and comfortable but the minute I entered it, I had a feeling of dislike for it.

After we had a short talk, we retired to bed. For some reason I was unable to rest. As it was getting toward dawn, I dozed off

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for a short time, but to my horror and amazement I awoke with a terrible shockfor at the foot of our bed I saw two Frenchmen in the act of a duel! Then they vanished.

The second night I awoke about four o'clock in the morning and saw the two Frenchmen again. I was made aware that they were guests of the hotel and had been staunch friends-but they were both in love with the same woman, and that was the cause of the trouble. I heard them speaking in their agitated French and saw the whole of the fight.

As I heard the clank of the swords, I saw them flashing in the mirror at the foot of the bed. The man on my left was the one that was stabbed through the chest, and then the slaver drew the sword from the form on the floor, and threw it down and I heard the crash on the floor. Then the man fled out of the hotel. The one who was killed was the woman's lover and she also fled from fear of what happened-but not with the slaver.

I did not spend another night in that room.

A short time later I was discussing my experience with a girl who lived in that place, and she told me that what I saw did occur at that hotel a good many years ago.

London, England.

Concerning the Color of Ghosts

I was much interested in the statement. printed in a recent number of GHOST STORIES, that the head of the American Society for Psychical Research had declared that "ghosts are not white but a reddish brown color-rather like liver."

Since reading that statement, I have run across a reply by Lady Ancaster (formerly Miss Eloise Breese, of New York) who disagrees with the head of the research society. She has the ghost of a Fourteenth Century nun in the picture gallery of her home, Grimsthorpe Castle, in Lincolnshire, and she declares that it is as white as snow.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,

A Skeptic's Vision

I read ghost stories with enjoyment but am pretty skeptical about psychic matters. However, I have had one unexplainable

experience that I shall never be able to forget.

In 1919 my father was in a private hospital in Chicago. He was quite old but his condition was not serious, and we had every reason for believing that his life would be spared for many happy years yet to come.

One evening I went to my room (we were living in an apartment on East Huron Street) and saw my father lying straight and still on my bed. I was so amazed that I could neither move nor speak. As I watched, his form rose slowly from the bed and, still holding its rigid position, floated silently out of the window. His eyes were open and staring, but he never seemed to see me.

When I recovered myself, I let out a yell and my sister came running, half-dressed, from the next room. I explained what had happened as well as I could. She immediately decided that something must have happened to Father and so she went frantically to the telephone and called the hospital.

Father had just died.

Now you can say that the vision was a pure hallucination or that I was drunk or crazy—or whatever you want to. But how can you account for the fact that the vision occurred at the moment of my father? death? I can't account for it—but still my subborn brain refuses to admit the existence of ghosts. To be frank, I don't know what to believe.

F. J.

Chicago, Illinois.

Factory-Made Phantoms

Have you heard about the ghost factory? It's focated in Los Angles and J. G. Thayer owns it. He manufactures spooks, spirit hands, voices from the "beyond" and aero-batic furniture. While the factory-made supernatural phenomena are 'd'or entertainment purposes only" as his catalog states, he does a national business and part of the paraphernalia, no doubt, finds its way into the hands of fate 'mediums." Thayer gave the great Houdini much of the matterial that he used in his exonsé of mediums.

Thayer charges five dollars for a set of six ghosts, all different. He can also supply you with a "spirit" hand, a "talking" skull and a "spirit-writing" slate for a very reasonable sum. A rapping and floating table, however, is more expensive.

I am a spiritualist but I have been doubly

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glad to see reports of this ghost factory in the daily press. If the public learns the secret of Thayer's purely mechanical devices, it will be a real boon to all sincere believers in psychic phenomena. The very worst enemy of psychic research is the fake medium, with his bag of mystifying tricks, and I hope that publicity and official exposés will put such people out of business. Then the genuine and important work of psychic research will have a chance to be heard and to win deserved recognition. N. S.

Kansas City, Missouri,

The Beloved Pony

When I was about eleven years old, my family lived in a small town in Arkansas. My father was the Baptist minister there, Across the street from us was the home of a Mrs. Hays, to whom I owe my one experience with the supernatural.

Mrs. Hays owned a beautiful saddle pony which she herself always looked after. Each morning when she first got up, she would bring out a small pan of shelled corn for her horse.

There was a great deal of diphtheria that winter and when Mrs. Hays gave birth to a baby, the little one contracted the disease and died. My father conducted the funeral services. Mrs. Hays, of course, was still confined to her bed.

The morning after the funeral I was up early and went out in our yard. Suddenly I looked across the street and saw Mrs. Hays, dressed all in white, with her little

pan, feeding her pony.

So I went into the house excitedly and told Mother that our neighbor was well again. My mother thought I was crazy or imagining things, for it was only five days since the baby had been born. However, as soon as she had finished her work, Mother went over to see how Mrs. Hays wasand they told her that she had passed away early that morning,

She had died a short time before I saw her feeding the pony. I cannot explain this fully-but I believe firmly that at the moment of death the soul is set free to do the things that it has longed to do. And I know that all the time Mrs. Hays was sick, she was worrying because there was no one to take care of her horse.

Mrs. B. W. C.

Los Gatos, California,





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